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THE

FAMINE CAMPAIGN IN SOUTHERN INDIA

VOLUME I.

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CHIEFS OF THE CAMPAIGN.

THE

FAMINE CAMPAIGN IN SOUTHERN INDIA

(MADRAS AND BOMBAY PRESIDENCIES AND PROVINCE OF MYSORE)

1876-1878

BY

WILLIAM DIGBY

HONORARY SECRETARY INDIAN FAMINE RELIEF FUND

4241

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

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LONDON
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1878

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'*We say that human life shall be saved at any cost and at any effort; no man, woman, or child shall die of starvation. Distress they must often suffer; we cannot save them from that. We wish we could do more, but we must be content with saving life and preventing extreme suffering.*'

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Jan. 1877.

PREFACE.

It is too soon to write a history of the famine campaign in India of 1876–1878. But it is not a day too soon to gather together the particulars of the various policies adopted in Madras, Bombay, and Mysore, while the facts are still fresh in men's memories, and the *minutiæ* of policy and administration are available, that these may remain on record to enable the historian to base his judgment upon a trustworthy narrative of facts. This it has been my chief object in the following pages to supply. Favoured by the Government of India, the Madras Government, and the Mysore Famine Commissioner, not only with the thousands of reports and orders which were issued during the campaign against famine, but also with copies of documents which were not made public, I have endeavoured from these materials and such other trustworthy evidence as came under my own notice, or could be obtained by enquiry, to place in a clear white light the events of a sad and troublous period in Southern Indian annals. I have naught extenuated nor aught set down in malice.

The want of such a work regarding former famines as it has been my anxious desire to produce respecting the latest, was greatly felt by the public generally, and especially by publicists, whose duty it is to inform public opinion, when distress first began to manifest itself two years ago. Apart from this fact, so disastrous and terrible a visitation as the late famine deserved some permanent record, more especially as interest in it has been greatly increased by the marvellous and greatly abounding sympathy displayed by the people of all parts of the British dominions towards their suffering fellow-subjects in Southern India. British feeling, however, did not content itself with gifts of money and expressions of deepest sympathy. In many parts of England and Scotland the lead given by Manchester was followed, and demand was made, by resolutions adopted in public meeting and transmitted to the Secretary of State for India, that such means should be undertaken by the Indian Government—aided, if necessary, by the Imperial Government—as would render it impossible in future that such a calamity as this, in which several millions of lives have been sacrificed to hunger and want-induced disease, should occur. The earnest practical sympathy of the British people needs accurate information if it is to exert the good it is capable of effecting. For such a purpose as this, which was in my mind at the time of writing, I venture to hope this work will be of some service. An article in the *Westminster Review* for April in this year shows

the necessity for a clear and full statement of facts being early put on record and made available. Whilst containing most appreciative expressions of sympathy with the suffering people, from the writer having obtained only a partial acquaintance with the literature of the subject—especially of the efforts and results of the charitable relief committees—the article alluded to minimises the suffering endured by the people, and the good effected by the means used non-officially to alleviate anguish.

I have to express my grateful acknowledgment to many kind friends for help rendered to me in the task I have undertaken; especially am I indebted to Colonel O. T. Burne, C.S.I., C.I.E., late Private Secretary to his Excellency the Viceroy, and to Roper Lethbridge, Esq., C.I.E., Press Commissioner with the Government of India. To other friends who have aided me greatly, but whose names I am not at liberty to mention, I am extremely grateful.

It remains only for me to add that, although this work was undertaken avowedly from a non-official point of view, and by one who, in his capacity as Editor of a daily newspaper in Madras, had had occasion to criticize adversely and condemn particular acts of administration, his Excellency the Viceroy and his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos recognized the value of a review of facts from an independent standpoint, and gave me all the aid it was in their power to afford, furnishing me with all the information that

could possibly be made known. Such value as this work may possess, regarded as a full and complete narrative of sad and sorrowful events, is owing to the unreserve of the noblemen just named.

WM. DIGBY.

MADRAS, *July* 1878.

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THE INDIAN FAMINE.

MADRAS.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEGINNING OF THE FAMINE.

'HERE's the north-east monsoon at last,' said the Hon. Robert Ellis, C.B, junior member of the Governor's Council, Madras, as a heavy shower of rain fell at Coonoor, on a day towards the end of October 1876, when the members of the Madras Government were returning from their summer sojourn on the hills.

'I am afraid that is not the monsoon,' said the gentleman to whom the remark was made.

'Not the monsoon?' rejoined Mr. Ellis. 'Good God! It must be the monsoon. If it is not, and if the monsoon does not come, there will be an awful famine.'

The next day, when the party had arrived on the plains, it was found that the heavy rain of the previous day was not a presage of the north-east monsoon; it was merely a local downpour, and, instead of the country side being refreshed with fallen rain, all was withered and bare and desolate. A dire famine had

settled upon the Presidency of Madras, but the fact was not yet realised by the Government, nor was it apprehended for some time after.

There was occasion for deep anxiety on the part of the authorities; the advance-guard of famine had been in the districts for months past. Just a year previously alarm and anxiety had been felt respecting the districts of Bellary, Cuddapah, South Arcot, and North Arcot, a territory nearly equal in extent to the southern half of England, and sums of money had been granted to collectors for relief works, and revenue was foregone to the amount of 710,899 rs.[1] To meet the distress occasioned in Bellary by the failure of the north-east monsoon of 1875, a grant of 12,000 rs. was made by telegram in December of that year; on the other districts named, no money was actually spent, but the collectors were warned to watch carefully the circumstances which had caused so much anxiety.

The collector of North Arcot was directed to consider whether improvement to wells could not be beneficially undertaken, as was done in Bellary in 1868, when famine was sore in that part of the land. In January 1876 the Government of India observed the state of things in Madras, and on the 22nd of that month sent the following telegram to the local Government: 'Your weekly telegram of state of season for week ending January 20, implies a very sudden change in prospects. Please report facts fully by letter, stating probable amount of remissions, localities affected, and any other important points.'

Several reports were forwarded, and on February 5 the Government of India called for a 'condensed statement of the views of the Government of Madras as to

[1] In the following proportions:—Bellary, 103,709 rs.; Cuddapah, 177,100 rs.; North Arcot, 150,000 rs.; and South Arcot, 280,000 rs.

the prospects of the districts;' and this was furnished exactly five months later. The condensed statement gave some interesting particulars of the extent and nature of the suffering, and concluded with the remark, 'Nothing certain can be predicted of the future of the coming season. Every precaution is being taken for guarding against the serious effects which a famine may produce if the current official year prove indifferent likewise, and relief works have been proposed and sanctioned for execution in the event of the necessity for providing labour to the poorer classes becoming imminent.'

The whole of the correspondence was forwarded from Simla to London on July 31; on October 5 its receipt was acknowledged by the Marquis of Salisbury, who echoed the main facts of the disaster, and remarked, 'The Government of Madras would appear to be regarding the condition of the districts with vigilant attention, and to be prepared to establish relief works should necessity arise.' Before the despatch reached India—from Madras, from Bombay, from Mysore the cry had gone up that grievous and sore distress was in their midst.

The Government of Madras in 1877 consisted of his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, Sir Neville Chamberlain, Commander-in-Chief, the Hon. Sir W. R. Robinson, K.C.S.I., and the Hon. R. S. Ellis, C.B. The Governor was, comparatively speaking, new to the country, and unfamiliar with the people and with Indian topics; the Commander-in-Chief took but little part in the civil affairs of the Presidency; Sir William Robinson knew the country most thoroughly: as Inspector-General of Police he had visited every part of it, and was known to possess great personal sympathy with Indians of all races; Mr. Ellis was a civilian of

much experience in Southern India, a man of wide culture, of decision in action, and generally able to take a large grasp of a particular situation. These were the men who had to face and fight the calamity which fell upon the Presidency in the autumn of 1876.

There had been anxiety for some months, the south-west monsoon having been a partial failure in some districts, a complete failure in others. Merchants had been prompt to see the need which the food stocks of the country would require of replenishment, and trade had been active long before Government made any sign that it apprehended wide-spread disaster. The magnitude of shipping operations which had been going on from the beginning of the year may be estimated from the fact that in nine months, from the district of Ganjam alone, 500,000 bags of rice were shipped to Madras. The marvellous development of the import trade of the Presidency will be found fully dealt with in the section of this work dealing with imported food, and need not, therefore, be further alluded to here. In August and September the public mind was much concerned with reports which found their way into the newspapers regarding distress in some of the districts; early in October the authorities were making some efforts to grapple with the impending disaster, and small relief works were opened in Bellary, in Nellore, and in other districts. According to the Blue Books which have been published, beyond a vague statement that 'relief works have been proposed and sanctioned for execution' in the event of necessity for them being proved, nothing whatever seems to have been represented to the Supreme Government by the Madras Council until the end of October; no report from district officers was called for between July and October, or, if called for and supplied, none were published. In

September and early in October residents in the Madras Presidency began to feel that their impressions regarding great scarcity were wrong, and that even limited want was not apprehended, for it was reported that his Grace the Governor was about to proceed on a long tour to the Andaman Islands, Rangoon, and Ceylon, in the last-named place to inquire about a railway which will not be wanted for a century. It was argued that if danger was impending the Governor would not leave his post. Merchants, however, continued importing on a larger scale than usual. Meanwhile, in public interest there was a lull—the lull before the storm breaks, as it subsequently proved. The decision of the Madras Government on a matter[1] in which race prejudices, religious scruples, social distinctions, were all combined, was published, and absorbed general attention, to the shutting out of the shadow of the great disaster which was rapidly approaching.

His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, and his Excellency Sir Neville Chamberlain, with their respective suites, left Madras in H.M. ss. *Tenasserim*, early in October, on the tour already described. Immediately before they departed, anxiety was again aroused on reports being received from Bombay of widespread scarcity in that Presidency. It was felt that the failure of the south-west monsoon must have affected many districts in Madras, as well as in Bombay, but, as the chief reliance of the agriculturist in the Eastern Presidency is on the north-east monsoon, the hope was cherished that the rains due on October 15 would suffice to avert intense disaster. This hope was shared by the members of Government left in charge of the Presidency, Sir Wm. Robinson and Mr. Ellis.

[1] The 'Weld' case, where a civilian had the body of a Hindu Sanyasi (saint) exhumed from its grave in a tank wall and buried elsewhere.

The days passed quietly; no information from Government offices reached the newspapers, excepting telegrams from collectors which contained only scrappy intelligence and were quite useless unless read in connection with those previously recorded; the comparison was never made, and the situation was not adequately grasped. Towards the end of October, no signs of the north-east monsoon being apparent, and the effect of the failure of the south-west rains in the central districts being experienced in increasing measure, it was apprehended that famine was nigh at hand; panic seized the people and the grain merchants. Prices rose to double and even treble the ordinary rates, and threats were made of looting grain bazaars. In some of the up-country districts, notably Kurnool, looting did occur, and the military had to be called out. The position of affairs, however, cannot better be described than in the words of the Government themselves.

'The public conviction of the absolute failure of the north-east monsoon was,' they say in a letter dated November 30, 'necessarily, from the nature of the event, arrived at suddenly. The result was that prices sprang at a bound to a point which they have scarcely ever been known to reach before, and from which they have hardly, even now, at all receded. The rise was so extraordinary and the available supply, as compared with well-known requirements, apparently so scanty, that merchants and dealers, hopeful of enormous future gains, appeared determined to hold their stocks for some indefinite time and not to part with the article which was becoming of such unwonted value. It was apparent to the Government that the facilities for moving grain by the rail were rapidly raising prices everywhere, and that the activity of apparent importation and of railway transit did not indicate any addition to the food stock of

the Presidency, or really afford security from temporary disaster. So it speedily proved. Grain was hurriedly withdrawn by rail and sea from the more remote districts, to their serious prejudice, and poured into central depôts, but retail trade up-country was almost at a standstill. Either prices were asked which were simply beyond the means of the multitude to pay, or shops remained entirely closed. Grain riots by hungry mobs of men, women, and even children, and more serious dacoities accompanied by violence, followed in many parts of the country, and elsewhere outbreaks occurred in the hope of checking exportation and thus preventing dreaded scarcity. These disorders, though speedily and effectually suppressed, added another element of confusion and danger.' These facts only came to the Government in detail. They first apprehended that the disaster was no longer afar off, but nigh at hand, on October 24, when the following telegram was sent to the President of the Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce Department at Simla :—' Condition of Kurnool, Cuddapah, and Bellary districts very bad, and daily becoming more gloomy. If north-east monsoon should not set in favourably within fifteen days, gravest results. Distress approaching famine will probably ensue in these districts, and great distress in some other districts. Present state of grain market causes us great anxiety. Prices prematurely reached famine rates. Following measures have been taken : relief works opened wherever distress prevails ; food to aged and children given in some places, and local officers being aided by additional temporary officers. Member of Board of Revenue visiting all districts most distressed. Very heavy Imperial expenditure probably inevitable.'

This was the first information which the supreme authorities received of probable famine in Madras. So

far as the Blue Book, Part I., shows—and it is to this the present writer has been referred by the Madras Government for particulars of the events which occurred prior to the formation of a Famine Department in Madras in December 1876—no particulars were sent to the Supreme Government of what had been transpiring between July and October. The reply of Sir Henry Norman, who was then acting as President of Council in the absence of the Viceroy on tour, was in these terms :—'Your telegram of yesterday. The President in Council has received with much concern the accounts of the distressed condition of Cuddapah, Bellary, and other districts, and fully approves of measures taken by Madras Government. His Honour wishes to receive, at the earliest practicable date, separate statements regarding each taluk in the distressed districts, showing its area, population, government, realisable revenue in 1875–76, rough proportion of early to late cultivation, average annual rainfall, actual rainfall this season, ordinary price of staple food of the taluka at this season, actual present price of the same, probable extent of failure of crops, and amount, if any, sanctioned for relief works and other relief.'

Two days later messages were exchanged between the controlling and subordinate Governments, which are of great importance in view of the disputes which occurred afterwards. On October 26 the Governor of Madras had reached Colombo, and his colleagues at once put themselves in communication with his Grace. Sir W. Robinson and Mr. Ellis had at this time estimated the difficulty to some extent, and saw that large schemes were needed to provide occupation for the large numbers coming on relief works.[1] The system of petty works, while sufficing for local distress, was inadequate

[1] The numbers of persons seeking employment had then increased to 160,000.

when intended to meet widespread want. The President in Council, Madras, therefore telegraphed to the Government of India (Oct. 27), as follows :—'A fortnight's time must determine whether famine is inevitable. In that case concentration of relief labour most necessary; already upwards of fifty thousand employed on scattered relief works in one district out of three. If famine contingency arises, we propose commencement of embankment work of Bellary-Guddak Railway, which traverses worst part of suffering district, as State work. Please telegraph reply.' The reply came from Sir Henry Norman, and was :—'The Government of India do not think it advisable in present emergency to sanction large and expensive works, the ultimate cost of which will greatly exceed the expense involved in providing labour for distressed poor. Local works should be organised. Bombay Government have been similarly instructed. The railway project must be decided on its merits.'

The Supreme Government, by its subsequent action, to be noted more in detail when dealing with the Bombay famine, confessed that it was wrong on this point. In its favour, when condemning, in early stages of famine, the commencement of large works, it may be stated that the fears expressed in January 1876 regarding probable famine in Bellary and other districts, had only been incompletely borne out. A few months after, viz., in the spring of 1876, the Vice-regal Council experienced a second alarm ; this time it was reported that the rains in Bengal had failed, and large schemes of remunerative public works were placed before the Viceroy. His Excellency, however, was disinclined to sanction these, preferring that, if partial scarcity occurred, small works, in the localities where distress existed, should be provided. Experience in the Bengal

famine of 1873-4 had shown that great projects might be commenced, much money expended upon them, but the projects themselves not be completed. Whilst the question was being considered, prospects became more favourable, and the need for either large or small works in Bengal passed away. The fear of famine, however, was not to be removed from the presence of the Supreme Government. A dropping fire recording rain-failure and consequent crop-loss was directed against the authorities throughout the year. No record appears in the Blue Books presented to Parliament of the fact that month by month, from October 22, 1875, the Chief Commissioner of Mysore had sent to the supreme authorities particulars of widening and deepening distress. Such particulars were furnished, and as far back as December 1875 it was seen that suffering was so great that the land revenue could not be collected without coercive measures. Mr. Dalyell was at that time acting as chief commissioner, and, on the permanent incumbent of the office arriving, proceeded from Bangalore to Calcutta, to take up his duties as member of the Legislative Council almost immediately after, which makes it strange that little notice appears to have been taken of the condition of Mysore, in the despatches to the Secretary of State. However, the expenditure of a lakh of rupees was authorised in April 1876 from the savings of the State, and this amount was ordered to be debited to district funds. Returning to the enquiry of the Madras Government, it would appear as if the supreme authorities had argued in this wise : 'What need to prepare for great disasters, when we find that the cry of "Wolf" has repeatedly been raised, when comparatively little or no danger existed ?' There was no wilful desire to ignore real distress, but a conviction that those on the spot where distress manifested itself would be, or were,

desirous of magnifying the disaster with which they might have to deal.

The Madras authorities telegraphed to Simla, a second time, on October 27, and asked for sanction for relief works amounting to 377,770 rs., adding that it was impossible to avoid expense or to provide necessary relief from provincial or local funds. The sanction was not accorded, but the production of certain returns, which had been asked for, was urged. Collectors were summoned from their districts to Madras and were consulted as to existing and prospective needs, and great earnestness and much effort were exhibited by the Government.

The action of the authorities may now be left for a time, and a glance taken at the position of affairs in the Presidency generally. In fourteen districts, covering an area of 80,000 miles, distress was felt.[1] It manifested itself in many ways,—in the mofussil (country districts) by people leaving their homes and wandering; in crowding to chuttrums (relief houses), and to large towns; in large crowds congregating around the dwellings of European officers and clamouring for employment. So far as possible, employment was provided, and a system of relief for people unable to work was arranged. In December, district officers were ordered to open relief works as people came. The rates of wages were to be fixed locally according to the market prices of grain:—

1½ lb. of grain per man—
1 „ „ „ woman.
¾ „ „ „ boy.

[1] The districts with their populations were:—

Cuddapah	1,351,194	Salem	1,966,995
Madura	1,325,549	Trichinopoly	1,200,408
Coimbatore	1,763,274	Kurnool	959,640
Bellary	1,668,006	Chingleput	935,184
N. Arcot	1,945,642	Tanjore	1,973,731
Kistna	1,434,090	Madras Town	397,552
Nellore	1,329,516	S. Arcot	1,755,517

being sufficient to provide food enough to sustain working powers, and to ensure a small surplus for condiments. In reference to an application from the collector of Coimbatore, the Board of Revenue did not think that better agency than the village officers, if they were sufficiently supervised by the tahsildars and other revenue officers of the higher grades, could be found to manage these works. 'The employment of the village coolies in collecting stones from the wayside, fields, or quarries, breaking them and storing them for use, would be highly beneficial and ultimately remunerative, and the work would be suited to all classes,—men, women, and children. The district is intersected with roads, and work of the kind could be found close to most villages in the district. Mr. Wedderburn should indent on Madras, through the Board, for such tools as may be required. He proposes to pay wages sufficient to purchase for a man 1½ lb., for a woman 1 lb., and for a boy ¾ lb. of grain. Copy of G.O., November 29, 1876, No. 1,843, will be furnished to him, whence he will see that Government are averse to money wages being raised above two annas, and that when that rate is insufficient to purchase necessary food, grain payments should be resorted to. His proposal that some of the taluk-shereshtadars should be invested with 2nd class powers, so as to free the tahsildars for supervision of relief works, commends itself to the Board.'

In the large towns melancholy specimens of emaciated beings were seen, but the climax was reached in the city of Madras. The inhabitants of the surrounding districts, particularly Chingleput and North Arcot, were most sorely stricken, and, few or no relief works being provided for them, they left their homes, and in large numbers flocked to Madras. With characteristic generosity a number of Hindu gentlemen arranged to

feed the starving poor, and the report spread that food was to be had in Madras for the asking. As was natural, the extent of the provision made was exaggerated. In North Arcot, whence the majority of the people came, they told one another, 'In Madras there are mountains of rice and rivers of ghee ; anybody who likes can have a share.'[1] Ten Hindus were feeding, with one meal per day, 11,400 people. An immense number of 'emaciated' congregated on the beach and obtained a precarious existence by picking up the grains which fell from the rice-carts, the grain being not always accidentally dropped. The scenes in the streets of Madras at this time (November 1876) and for seven or eight subsequent months were unique, and in many respects sad and disheartening.[2] Much excitement was caused by a report of death from starvation in one of the most frequented streets of the city ; a villager and his family had 'wandered' into the town ; these were without food for several days, two of the children died and were buried, and then the man died of absolute want in sight of thousands of bags of grain.[3] One of the daily journals, in a spasm of excitement, charged the authorities with manslaughter. How terribly the people suffered, and how cruelly they treated their children,[4] will never be adequately known,

[1] Report of Assistant Collector of North Arcot.

[2] Report by Colonel W. S. Drever, C.S.I., Commissioner of Police. This report shows in detail the means adopted to relieve distress and keep down abnormal disease in a large city under peculiar circumstances.

[3] It is a fact not generally known, that when the body of the man who died of starvation was searched by the police, several rupees were found concealed in his clothes.

[4] A good deal of inhumanity to their children was shown by parents. The Rev. Mr. Schaffter, of the Church Missionary Society, gives a painful instance which occurred near Madras early in December. Relief was provided in the shape of rice conjee. This kind of food, however, would not seem to be acceptable to some people, as the following facts will show. 'A pariah Christian, his wife and four children, belonging to the village of Vallaveram, near Streeperamputhur, had been receiving relief from the be-

but incidents are related again and again which serve in some measure to give an idea of the suffering. For instance, near the Tinnevelly district, where distress was deemed to be comparatively slight, Mr. McQuhae, the collector of the district, after visiting thirty villages which were most affected, found a large number of people had left their homes and were already 'wandering.' Much support was derived from jungle and other roots, and Mr. McQuhae himself, on the journey referred to, witnessed one hundred people engaged in picking a root which he found was unhealthy. He also met with 'ten females returning home with a few handsfull of grain taken from ants' holes in return for six or eight hours' labour.' Very early in the course of the distress, the people exhibited the faculty which Orientals seem to possess above all others, viz., that of reducing their food by one-half at least, eating but one meal a day, and that a scanty one, or one in two days. So early as January 1877, Mr. McQuhae found such cases were not rare in the villages which he visited. Mr. Turner, writing from Ramnad, says—'At Perunali the people were complaining much. A good deal of well-cultivation goes on, but the grain looks poor. There are some fair crops in the bed of the Perunali tank. After leaving Perunali the country is perfectly bare,—a bleak country, no crops, no trees, no water. About Parunali, Paralachi, the people were living largely on the 'sauci

ginning. The man was told that he was able to work, and ought to go and get his own livelihood, leaving his wife and children to be cared for in the relief house; but he refused to do so, and finding that he was to get conjee instead of rice, he refused to partake of it or let his family have it, though he was begged by one of Mr. Schaffter's catechists to let the children at all events have a meal. The man was obstinate, and went away in a huff because he could not get the accustomed rice and pice to which he seemed to think he had established a sort of claim. The consequences to the poor children were that one, about four years old, died, while the youngest child was discovered soon after to be in a sinking state.'

roots,' apparently a sort of wild arrowroot. They boil it down for three days to extract the poisonous properties, and then make a sort of thick conjee of it. Even the supply of this root is, as far as I can learn, nearly exhausted. Between Paralachi and Mandapasalai, and thence to Aruppukottai the punjah (dry) crops have failed everywhere: as regards nunjah (wet), of course there is none. There is no water in any of the tanks in the south. From Mandapasalai to Kamudi the crops for the most part are gone, and the people everywhere are suffering much.' Under instructions from Government the district authorities were speedily on the alert, and in some districts, notably Coimbatore, which had the advantage of possessing as collector Mr. Wedderburn, who had charge of Bellary during the (local) famine year of 1868, wise forecasts were being made and preparations were at hand to meet all probable needs. It was early decided by the Government that the policy to be adopted should be a humane one, and that, if possible, no one should be allowed to die for want of support. This result was said to be attained in Behar in 1874, and, it was hoped, might be repeated in Madras. Village officials were warned that they would be held accountable for deaths by starvation, and orders were issued in each district, similar to the following :—

'*To all Village Magistrates in the North Arcot District.*

'In Gurrumkondah, of Cuddapah district, there was a poor sick man who, having no money to purchase food, was, from starvation, neither able to go out of his house nor work. He continued to be in that state for some days, and at last died of starvation and sickness. As the village magistrate rendered no assistance to the man, nor made a report of his death, he was suspended for a year. Village magistrates are hereby warned that

they will be held responsible for the safety of the individuals whose deaths may have been occasioned by starvation, timely steps not having been taken about them. It is very unfortunate to have no rains, which is an act of God, and for which we can do nothing. But we can help those who would probably die of starvation. All persons who are able to work can get work if they would go to places where works are executed. In the case of persons who cannot work, either by age or by sickness, endeavours should be made to relieve them, and they should be sent to the nearest tahsildar or sub-magistrate. If they are unable even to go there, the circumstance should at once be reported to those officers, who will, no doubt, take the necessary steps regarding them. If they are very weak, they should be sent to the nearest dispensary upon a dhooly. You will be reimbursed all legitimate charges you may have incurred on their account. Every village magistrate should bear in mind that he will be strictly held responsible for the safety of the lives of the people in his village.

'Chittoor, December 22, 1876.' [1]

On December 1 distress had increased so greatly that the returns sent in showed there were 310,000 people on the hands of the authorities. One of the first steps taken by the Madras Government was to send two members of the Board of Revenue—experienced officials, who reached the Board table only after having had long and intimate experience of the

[1] The Collector of Chingleput issued this order in regard to deaths from herbs unfit for human food:—

Takid to the tahsildar of Ponnery, No. 54, dated February 1, 1877. Your arzi, No. 62, dated January 29 last, together with its enclosure, has been duly received. It appears from it that the poor people living in the hamlets of Elavoor were feeding on certain herbs called சலவுன ஒடாட, and the consequence has been that about ten persons have died of cholera.

country, as administrators—on tour; and Mr. Thornhill, C.S.I., and the Hon. D. Arbuthnot, proceeded on a visit to the districts. The last-named officer left Madras on November 5, and his report, which refers to the district of Kurnool, gives a fair idea of the state of the country as a whole. An abstract of this report may therefore be taken as representative of the whole twelve districts affected.

On the road to Kurnool Mr. Arbuthnot found there were no crops whatever, and the few attempts that had been made to cultivate had proved entire failures, and an occasional patch of withered cholum straw was the only remnant of vegetation. Close to the town of Kurnool, there was a small extent of rice cultivation under the canal; but beyond the influence of the canal there was no cultivation whatever, and up to that time 'even the water of the canal had not been utilised to any great extent, but had been allowed by the ryots to run waste for many months.' Why this waste of water was permitted ought to have been made the subject of enquiry, but was not.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Kurnool, relief works had been commenced a few days previous to Mr. Arbuthnot's arrival, and people crowded on the works in such numbers that in a few days there were about 15,000 people working within six miles of Kurnool, on three different lines of road. Sufficient arrangements had not been made before the works were opened for superintending so vast a number, and the result was the utmost confusion, both as regards the work and the payment. On November 9 a little rain fell, and

You will report what work may be best undertaken in the neighbourhood to provide work for the starving population. You will also recommend the dismissal of such village munsiffs as have neglected to do their duty in relieving the destitute as ordered in takid No. 41.

(Signed) R. W. Barlow, Collector.

the prices of grain fell slightly; but the rain ceased, and the prices rose again rapidly. The merchants refused to sell in such large quantities as were required; and the coolies themselves were unable to buy sufficient food with the wages then paid to them. Seeing no chance of a reduction of prices, and knowing, too, that there was a block on the railway from excessive traffic, and that cholera was making its appearance in several places, Mr. Arbuthnot most reluctantly gave his consent to the price of labour being raised from two to three annas per man, as a temporary measure. 'Alarming accounts reached me (says Mr. Arbuthnot) from Mr. Farmer, in charge of the Cumbum division, and finding that no relief works had been commenced there, the poorest part of the district, directions were sent to him to commence works at once, and 500 tons of rice were ordered from Madras *viâ* Cuddapah. Directions were also sent to the collector of Nundial to commence works on his division, consisting of Nundial and Sirwell taluks.'[1]

On November 14 Mr. Arbuthnot reached Nundial. He says:—'On this line of road, 45 miles in length, the country is a barren waste; the land visible from the road does not hold even a withered stalk, and the low hills, through which the road runs, which at this season are usually covered with grass, are perfectly bare. This state of things continued up to the vicinity of Nundial. There, the crops under the tank which was being filled from the canal are good, and there is a considerable area of cholum which has been saved by the canal water. Mr. Latham (of the Madras Irrigation Company) informed me that he had roughly calculated the amount of grain of all kinds under the canal at 20,000,000 pounds; this would require an area of nearly 20,000 acres.

[1] All these places will be found on the map which accompanies vol. ii. of this work.

'On reaching Nundial there were about 4,000 coolies at work, and 1,000 more at Puneum. There was great confusion and difficulty in paying the coolies within a reasonable time, as at Kurnool. There was also the same difficulty about grain. The merchants refused to sell the quantities required, and the coolies themselves had great difficulty in purchasing food grain, and had in many cases to content themselves with horse gram and other kinds of pulse. The numbers increased daily till they amounted to about 12,000.

'It was now clear that the revenue staff was quite unequal to the task before it, and I requested that military officers might be sent to assist in organising these vast crowds of people. Hearing that grain was procurable at Prodatur in Cuddapah taluk, the tahsildar of Sirwell was instructed to buy up grain there, and have it forwarded to Chegalenurry. As soon as this grain arrived I found that the markets were easier, and that grain was more easily obtained by the coolies. On this, the rates of "cooly" were ordered to be lowered from 3 to 2½ annas over the whole division, and the Sirwell tahsildar was desired to buy more grain, and to pay his coolies as far as possible in grain. This tahsildar, Narrainsawmy Naidu, gave me every aid in purchasing grain, and he also managed the coolies at work in his taluk remarkably well. A subscription was set on foot to provide relief for the helpless poor of Nundial, and 700 rs. were promised. In this matter the Rev. Messrs. Johnston and Spencer kindly assisted me, and the former promised his aid in the distribution of food.

'On November 22 I reached Sirwell, and found 2,000 coolies at work in great confusion. The Sirwell tahsildar, who had arrived from Chegalenurry, set to work and got these coolies into fair order, a most difficult task

where numbers increase very rapidly. He had fortunately brought some grain with him, and most of the coolies were paid in grain.

'Being anxious to visit the Cumbum division, I passed through the Nundy Cannama on November 25, and reached Mr. Farmer's camp on the same day. He was then in the southern part of the Cumbum taluk, and had over 3,000 coolies working well and in good order. His greatest difficulty was about grain, which was scarcely to be got at all till an arrival of Government rice from Cuddapah made matters easier for a time. Up to the time I arrived, he had received no extra aid beyond the taluk establishment, which in this division is remarkably weak in every respect. He had no subordinate who had any knowledge or experience in working large bodies of men, and most of them seemed to have no power of keeping to the rules laid down for their guidance, although the use of these rules had been practically shown to them by Mr. Farmer himself, and the result was that great disorder again crept into the management when his immediate assistance was withdrawn. He divided his taluks judiciously into different ranges, placing a revenue subordinate in charge of each range, but these officers were wanting both in numbers, and, I regret to say, in efficiency, to carry out their instructions properly. Finding that the division was in a worse plight than any other part of the district, and that Mr. Farmer was utterly alone, I resolved to devote the rest of the time I could spare to go through the division with him, and assist him to the best of my power. The greatest want was that of grain, which in many villages we visited was only procurable in very small quantities, and at very high rates; rice at three, and cholum at four measures[1] per rupee.

[1] A measure contains 3 lbs. weight. The ordinary prices of these grains would be—rice 10 or 12 measures, cholum 26 to 30 measures, per rupee.

We had frequently to halt at villages to procure grain from Cumbum, where cholum was bought wholesale at five measures per rupee, and when grain reached us, relief works were started and left in charge of a revenue subordinate, and we had on more than one occasion to leave Mr. Farmer's head clerk in charge of the coolies till some substitute could be found. While thus going on from village to village in Cumbum taluk, orders were sent to the tahsildar of Markapur to open relief works at Markapur and Dupad, and to purchase as much grain as he could at market rates. Many of the villages we visited to the north-west of Cumbum were in a wretched state, and many of the people were almost in the last stage of destitution, subsisting chiefly on leaves mixed with a little cholum. After seeing works commenced in various villages in Markapur taluk, we marched from Dornall to Dupad. On the way we visited a small village that had been utterly deserted about two months before. At many of the villages the people were clamorous for work, which we promised to give them as soon as possible; but we had then no person to put in charge of additional works, and we had no resource but to tell them to go on to the work at Dupad, which was then overcrowded. At Dupad we found nearly 5,000 coolies in a state of deplorable confusion, and it took many days of hard work to get them into tolerable order. Mr. Farmer, however, worked amongst them with such energy that they were gradually being brought into good order. Deaths by the wayside were not uncommon. These were usually attributed to cholera, but what share want may have had in the matter it is impossible to say. My attention had been some time previously drawn to the fact by Mr. Farmer, that many families had, many weeks before my arrival, deserted their villages, and proceeded, it was

said, to the Kistna district. To estimate the numbers that had done so with any degree of accuracy was impossible without a careful enquiry that would have occupied many weeks, but from an examination of many villages, from which desertions had taken place, Mr. Farmer was inclined to think that not less than 3,000 families had left their villages from the pressure of want, and I have reason to believe that a few of these perished from starvation while wandering in quest of food in the neighbouring districts. Besides these, and a few poor travellers, there is no reason to suppose that any considerable number of deaths have taken place from starvation. There have also been a few cases of abandonment of children by parents, but in nearly all these cases the children have been rescued.' Mr. Arbuthnot further remarks: 'I have already forwarded to the Board of Revenue a rough calculation of the numbers in the Cumbum division that will probably require Government aid, and I have no reason to think that the number is in any way over-estimated at 76,000.'

One noticeable feature in the report quoted is the testimony given of deaths having occurred from actual want. A companion picture to Mr. Arbuthnot's is given in the account of a visit to Bellary, by a special correspondent[1] who was in that—the worst affected—district at the same time. From his letters, certain passages deserve quotation. The writer arrived at Bellary after visiting Sholapore in Bombay, where

[1] The *Statesman and Friend of India*, Calcutta, is honourably distinguished amongst Indian journals in having sent a correspondent to visit all the affected districts in the two Presidencies and the province of Mysore. The gentleman employed made a tour lasting six months, proved himself a most careful and judicious observer, and none of his facts were questioned. The *Times of India* sent a correspondent to the affected districts in Bombay for a short period, and also to Madras for two brief periods. The *Bombay Gazette* also had a correspondent in the Bombay distressed districts, and in Madras Presidency for a short time, during Sir Richard Temple's tours.

arrangements were in an inchoate condition, and was inclined to doubt the reality of distress in Bellary, as he saw no hungry-looking persons about. The fact was, famine had been present in the district many months, had spread from taluk to taluk gradually, and Mr. Master (the collector) had been able to formulate his plans to meet it without much suffering being apparent. The Madras Government had confidence in Mr. Master, and as he called for further European assistance on distress manifesting itself, his applications were granted. A description is given of the mode by which relief works were established and overlooked, which may stand for all of the same class in the Presidency, as all were worked after the same fashion.

The correspondent says:—'I can speak with particularity about what is done upon the relief works in this collectorate, and the organisation is such as cannot be surpassed at Sholapore, if it be even equalled there. In the first place, all the tahsildars, without exception, have been set free for famine work; and their duty seems to consist solely of directing the operations under the sub-collector; they remain at their own head-quarters and daily inspect all that is going on in their taluks, so that the superintendents and *maistries* who are actually on the roads are under immediate supervision of an officer whom they fear only second to the sub-collector. The chief man on the spot upon a relief work is the superintendent, who is generally a European or East Indian. He has one or two native assistants; and next to these are one or two sappers upon each work. These sappers were first obtained from the corps to superintend the construction of the roads, which is of course being carried out by the Public Works department: but their discipline and superior intelligence have been turned to account in the manage-

ment of the work-people, which is all under Mr. Price. The next men in order are the *maistries*, one to every 250 coolies, who are paid six annas a day; while each gang of 250 coolies is divided into five parties under five head-coolies who get three annas a day. As may be imagined, it was a little difficult to get suitable men for all these petty appointments; many of them were produced from Madras. The pay of the labourers on the works is 2 annas a day to a man, 1½ to a woman, and ¾ to a child. The rates were two or three pies less at first. These rates are nearer the ordinary rates here (viz. 3 as., 2 as., and 1 a.) than they are in Poona and Sholapore. The people do not work on Sundays, but receive wages as usual. The hours of work are from sunrise till 4 in the afternoon, with one hour in the middle of the day for food and rest. The *maistries* are especially directed not to allow very old people to be employed, nor children under seven years of age. Another of the rules for the guidance of the *maistries* is:—"As soon as you have prepared your nominal rolls (*i.e.*, list of persons to be set to work each day,) you will send them by one of your *kolkars* (head-coolies) to the *goomastah* (paymaster) in charge of the lists, and you will, without waiting for their return, issue the tools to your gang, and remain at the depôt until the D. P. W. *maistrie* comes to show you your work. You will then take your party (gang) and set to work as directed." One gang is allotted to each furlong of a road, and a temporary shed, distinguished by a red flag, serves as a tool depôt for every two gangs. There is one paymaster to three gangs, or 750 coolies, and I have carefully satisfied myself that the people are paid without failure every day. The rule regarding the paying is:—"At four o'clock, but not before, you will bring your gang to your tool depôt, and make them

give over their tools, which you will place in the hut. You will then direct your *kolkars* to make their gangs sit down in rows by the side of the paymaster; the men on one side, and the women and children on the other. The paymasters have instructions not to pay until the gangs have been so seated. You will then assist the paymaster in paying your gang, and see that the *kolkars* keep order. After the payment of the coolies is over, you will see that the night watchman of the depôt is present. You may then go home." The *maistries* are strictly warned that dismissal will follow any neglect of these orders, and severe punishment under the penal code, any attempt to cheat the coolies. Mr. Price rides out to at least one of the works every morning and evening, and the tahsildar, who also possesses the power of dismissal without appeal, often goes out also; and as it is not known which direction these officers are taking any day, the chances of neglect or fraud by the superintendents and *maistries* are reduced to next to nothing. Now that I have seen the mode of working at Bellary, it seems to me a serious mistake of the Bombay Government to expect single collectors, in addition to their ordinary duties, to take any adequate charge of relief operations. At the same time, it is personally due to Mr. Price to say, that he understands the art of organisation much better than the average run of men. This then is one reason for there being no starvation here.'

A visit to the works showed that owing to the excellent management there was great contentment among the people, whose wages were paid every day, and whose complaints were listened to with patience and redress afforded. Subsequently, in many parts of the Presidency, great peculations occurred on works and in camps, owing to the slight European supervision

which could be afforded. Here, as elsewhere, in places where the people were congregated in large numbers, cholera broke out, and made great havoc among the enfeebled masses. The plan most in favour to grapple with the disease was to break up large bodies into small gangs. Notwithstanding this, however, terrible ravages occurred, and a few months later, in the Bellary district, Mr. Oldham, a most energetic and useful officer from Bengal, described a visitation of cholera amongst the people under his charge, respecting the effects of which Byron's lines on the destruction of Sennacherib's host would be no exaggeration. Mr. Oldham's own words are, 'The road (upon which the people were labouring) bore almost the appearance of a battle-field, its sides being strewed with the dead, the dying, and those recently attacked.'

Finding the labours of famine relief rapidly increase, a new department, called the Famine Department, was created early in December, and Mr. J. H. Garstin, collector of South Arcot, was placed in charge, and designated Additional Secretary to Government. The Governor had returned to his duties about the middle of November, and efforts in earnest were taken to grapple with the calamity. One large work at least was undertaken, viz. the East Coast Canal, which it was resolved, on November 15, should be taken up as a famine relief work. It consisted of eighty-two miles of excavation. In the town of Madras the greatest actual distress was witnessed; but relief measures having been placed in the trustworthy hands of Colonel Drever, and the members of Government taking much personal and active interest in what was being done, only slight anxiety was felt regarding the chief city. The public wished to share in the efforts made to mitigate distress, and some discussion took place regarding

the advisability of opening subscriptions and soliciting alms from Great Britain and elsewhere. The proposal was discouraged by the authorities, and but faintly supported by the general public. It was felt that the distress was on so vast a scale that only Government organisation could cope with it: further, relief afforded in Madras and other large towns caused exaggerated reports to be spread, and people flocked into the town until they became unmanageable. At this time 19,000 were being fed in the city—16,000 by Government and 3,000 by private charity.

It has already been remarked that private trade was active in importing food grains; more active than might have been expected, seeing that the Government kept the state of affairs as secret as they could. By the end of October large orders had been sent to Calcutta and Rangoon, and on November 2 it was reported that engagements had been made for vessels[1] to bring 427,000 bags, which, added to the quantity then being landed, brought the total to 527,000 bags, containing 86½ millions of lbs. of rice. What this quantity represented in food supplies may be gathered from the following fact. To sustain existence, a man needs 1½ lb. of rice a day; the 86½ millions of lbs. would suffice for the maintenance of 1,920,622 adults, or say two millions of people, for a month of thirty days. In October 335,491 bags of rice were imported in Madras. Gloomy as was the outlook for the time being, it was rendered less anxious from the fact that railways ran

Sea Gull (s)	2	trips for say	50,000	bags.
Sultan (s)	3	„ „	120,000	„
Bellona (s)	3	„ „	90,000	„
Atholl (s)	3	„ „	75,000	„
V. Schillizzi (s)	1	„ „	20,000	„
British India (s)	3	„ „	30,000	„
D. of Argyll (s)	1	„ „	12,000	„
Mss. Londonderry	1	„ „	14,000	„
Florence	1	„ „	16,000	„

through all but two of the affected districts, viz. Kurnool and Nellore, and that, therefore, food could be poured into the places where it was most needed. The scene of activity in the roadstead and on shore was unexampled in the history of Madras. At the first sign of need for large imports, the tax on rice imported was taken off by the Government.

In the meantime, unknown to the local merchants, the Madras Government had entered the market as buyers of grain. Some uneasiness had been felt as to the probability of such a course being adopted, secret purchases having been the sheet-anchor of Lord Northbrook's famine policy in Behar. As, however, the practice had been much condemned, great hope was expressed that similar action would not be taken in Madras. It was also known that the supreme authorities objected to interference with trade, and were not disposed either themselves to undertake importation or to sanction such a course in their subordinates. In spite of the activity of trade,—the note on a previous page giving details of the extent of importations appearing in a local newspaper on November 2—the Government on November 4 commenced to purchase on their own account. The justification urged and the argument used by the authorities for their action were these. In justification they said, 'The idea of a Government reserve to meet the various difficulties arising from the caprices of native trade, and the actual insufficiency of local capital, was not novel or original. It had been advantageously adopted in the North-West Provinces in 1873-74, and was the main feature of the policy of Lord Northbrook's Government during the Bengal famine.' Their argument was this: 'The Government found themselves suddenly confronted with this position, that a large proportion of the labouring population of a wide

tract of country had become at once dependent on State relief works for the means of earning their daily food, but that that food was not obtainable with whatever money they could earn.'

In this emergency, and to meet these peculiar circumstances, the Government decided at once that a reserve of grain was indispensable. The objection to interference with ordinary trade was not for a moment absent from the consideration of Government, nor was the possibility of the crisis being of short duration, although liable to constant recurrence, left unnoticed. But the Government could not wait for the restoration of a more normal condition of trade. They had to secure the supply of food for vast numbers, daily increasing, who could not purchase grain at any rates of wages it would have been prudent to issue, for the local grain merchants raised their prices daily, with the special object of forcing up the rate of wages. Payment in grain, and direct purchases from the local markets by the Government, was the only course left. The Government knew that the purchase of grain would have to be continued for months, and it seemed to them that there was an absolute necessity that they should not be entirely dependent on a most uncertain condition of the grain trade, insufficient from indisposition to sell regularly, and extravagant in its demands when willing to sell. While the Government were satisfied that a moderate reserve was an essential resource on emergency, they were very desirous to avoid their transaction being immediately known. A knowledge that Government was in the market would immediately alarm the native trade, and cause a simultaneous rise in prices. It was for this reason that they employed Messrs. Arbuthnot & Co. confidentially, whose purchases of grain and resales at Bellary, where matters were most critical, had

the effect of inducing other English firms to enter actively into the grain trade, with the greatest advantage as regards the supply of grain where it was dangerously deficient, and in promoting some activity in the retail trade and a slight downward tendency in prices.

These reasons were only urged subsequently by the Madras Government, on their conduct being condemned. Without in any form consulting the Government of India, an arrangement was made with a local firm—Messrs. Arbuthnot and Co.—to purchase a Government reserve of 13,000 tons of rice and 2,000 tons of wheat, to be delivered in November. This was to be supplemented in the following month by 15,000 tons of rice. The action was for a time kept secret. In giving the Government of India notice of this transaction by telegram on November 4, the local authorities said, 'These supplies are to be strictly held as reserve to meet contingency of local markets and private enterprise failing. . . . Estimated cost, whole transaction, 32 lakhs. . . . This Government rely on Government of India to place four lakhs of rs. a week in Bank of Bengal, at credit of Arbuthnot and Co. for next five weeks, keeping transaction secret.' Seven days after, Sir Alexander Arbuthnot, head of the department in the first instance charged with famine administration, replied, requesting that no further purchases might be made without previous reference and full explanation. 'The proceeding then reported was calculated to cause serious financial embarrassment.' As might be expected, the financial aspect of the campaign against famine had caused the Supreme Government great concern. They were expected to meet all expenditure in the Presidencies affected, and, with finances so severely strained as those of India are in normal years, they were anxious that no

measures should be undertaken which had not received their approval.

On November 13 the Madras Government proceeded to justify their conduct in a letter[1] addressed to the Financial Secretary, using arguments similar to those given on a previous page. The letter itself was very brief, and betrayed a spirit of antagonism and discontent at being controlled, and it is no wonder that, immediately on receipt of it, the Revenue Secretary at Calcutta, in a telegram, pointed out that the letter did not 'contain any explanation of the necessity for taking action without previous reference to the Government of India.'

It was further remarked, by way of censure, 'The action of the Madras Government seems inconsistent with the alleged activity of private trade.' The reply to this message still evaded the point at issue, and went on to state that prospects were so bad that the purchase of 20,000 tons of grain further had been decided upon, and the supreme authorities were exhorted not to fear their subordinates allowing the State stock to accumulate beyond strict necessity. The rejoinder from Simla was an absolute prohibition to make further purchases, except after full explanations had been supplied by letter and permission to purchase was given. It was also remarked that the idea of secrecy might be put aside, as the 'arrangement made with Gillanders, Arbuthnot and Co. is known in Calcutta;' hitherto communications had been carried on in cipher, but the order to stop sales was *en clair*. The Madras Government made this a subject of complaint, and said that it was 'feared this abandonment of the cipher system will have rendered futile all the efforts this Government have made to keep their operations secret, so as not to discourage private dealers.' Retort soon followed, and took the following

[1] Famine Blue Book, Part I. page 83.

form, the writer being the Officiating Secretary to the Government of India. 'I am directed to inform you that the telegram in question was necessarily despatched in words and not in cipher. Your telegram of the 4th instant did not reach the President in Council at Simla until the 11th idem. By that time nearly all the officers had left Simla, and when Sir A. Arbuthnot's telegram was despatched no copy of the cipher code was available at that place. The President in Council was clearly of opinion that, in the absence of stronger grounds than those assigned by the Madras Government, it was necessary to prevent, without a day's loss of time, any further expenditure of the nature of that which had been reported, and under the circumstances, this could only be done by despatching a telegram *en clair*. If any inconvenience has resulted from what has occurred, it is due to the Government of Madras in carrying out, without any previous reference to the Government of India, and without, as would appear, any reasons for urgency, a measure which obviously required the previous sanction of this Government.

'But the President in Council does not see the slightest grounds for supposing that any knowledge which may have been obtained by the public of the recent operations of the Madras Government has been communicated by the telegraph department. Experience shows that the contents of telegrams very rarely become public in this way. In the present case, as intimated in my telegram of the 24th instant, the fact of the purchases arranged for by the Madras Government, and several details connected with them, which could not have been learnt from Sir A. Arbuthnot's telegram, were known in Calcutta some days ago. The fact is that the nature of the transaction was incompatible with secrecy. Large purchases of grain cannot be made without their destination becoming known.'

The arrangement had become known, and great anxiety was in consequence caused in mercantile circles. At this time, while loud and energetic protests against inaction were being made by the public, the Government of Madras was actively working—but it was in the dark. No communications were published showing that efforts were being made to adequately grapple with the crisis. Not hearing that remedial measures in sufficient number were in course of adoption, the public, very naturally, supposed none were being taken. The press was treated with contempt; the public were ignored. When rumours became current of Government purchases, the quantity of grain ordered was magnified ten times, and instead of thirty thousand tons, the authorities were credited with a desire to purchase three hundred thousand. Unfounded reports [1] were current, and—at a distance—believed, such, for instance, as that members of the local Government were connected with the firm employed and were interested in the contracts made. Such reports were baseless, but were the natural fruit of the system of secrecy employed. It was not until the end of February that public confidence was restored by the Government informing the Chamber of Commerce, in reply to a question asked, that only 30,000 tons had been imported, and further operations were not contemplated.

[1] Telegram, November 27, 1876, from Officiating Revenue Secretary, Calcutta, to Chief Commissioner, Mysore:—'Is statement made in Calcutta *Englishman* that you have bought two hundred thousand bags of grain at Madras, correct? President in Council considers it most important not to interfere with private grain trade, and desires that no large purchases of grain be made without sanction of Government of India.'

Telegram, November 28, 1876:—From Chief Commissioner, Mysore, to Officiating Revenue Secretary, Calcutta:—'Statement in Calcutta *Englishman* referred to is devoid of foundation; Mysore administration has bought no grain, but Central Relief Committee have purchased five hundred rupees worth of ragi and five hundred bags of rice for charitable distribution in kitchens and on works.'—*Blue Book*, Part I. p. 96.

Trade activity continued. Supplies were poured into the affected districts by sea and land. Preference was given on the railways to grain traffic, and the working power of the lines was exerted to the utmost. The important part played by railways in feeding the people is described elsewhere. It was stated that there were three and a half miles of waggons of grain awaiting transport at one station on the Great Indian Peninsular Railway, and though this was an exaggerated statement, it was admitted that there was a great block on the railway, owing, not to want of establishment, but to deficiency of waggon stock, and station and siding accommodation. 'The railway company, repeatedly urged to do all in their power to clear their line, have borrowed stock wherever available, increased their traffic staff, and are doing all they can. The agent suggested booking no more grain, but the Bombay Government did not approve, as the measure was likely to check trade.'

In various ways the Madras authorities exerted themselves greatly to meet the difficulty, and on December 23 thus reported to the Secretary of State[1] on their operations:—'We regret to state that there has been no improvement in the season. No rain has been reported from any part of the country except Tanjore and Tinnevelly. Nearly a week ago two inches of rain fell at Negapatam, and the fall extended along the coast of the district, but was much lighter in the interior. From Tinnevelly a moderate rainfall has been reported.

'Prices have risen, and there is a general upward tendency. We note below the most recent quotations reported to us from the several districts:—

[1] The Governors of Madras and Bombay have the privilege of communicating direct with the Secretary of State for India.

DISTRICT	Price, seers per rupee A seer = 80 tolahs or 2·06 lbs. weight		DISTRICT	Price, seers per rupee A seer = 80 tolahs or 2·06 lbs. weight	
	Second sort rice	Cholum or other ordinary grain		Second sort rice	Cholum or other ordinary grain
Ganjam	13	22	South Arcot	6·56	9·37
Vizagapatam	12	17·49	Salem	7	8·29
Godavery	10·43	13·37	Trichinopoly	6·75	11·4
Kistna	12·7	14·8	Tanjore	7·5	9
Nellore	6·75	9·25	Coimbatore	7·5	9·62
Cuddapah	7	8·72	Madura	6·18	9·75
Kurnool	6·27	7·97	Tinnevelly	7·5	11·49
Bellary	6·33	7·5	Nilgiri	6	15
North Arcot	7·7	9·1	Malabar	10·16	11·37
Chingleput	8·22	11·23	South Canara	11·45	12.91
Madras	6·7	10·25			

The failure of the north-east monsoon, so far as agricultural operations are concerned, must now be pronounced complete, and the scanty crops which were sown in October and November in the districts on the east coast, dependent upon the north-east monsoon for their principal crop, are now withering. We hope to be able in our next despatch to place before your Lordship details (which are now being collected), as to the breadth of land which has been cultivated, and as to the rainfall in these districts, and these will, we are sure, sufficiently prove the gravity of the present crisis.

'We thought it advantageous, for obvious reasons, that we should have personal communication with the principal officers of the affected districts, and we accordingly summoned the collectors of districts easily accessible by rail [1] to a conference here, and have discussed with them the prospects of their districts and the measures which should be taken to cope with the anticipated distress. This gave us an opportunity of realising the most pressing wants of these districts and of explaining to our officers the principles which we

[1] Chingleput, North Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore, Madura, Tanjore.

considered should be observed. We now proceed to review the several districts of the Presidency. The districts of South Arcot, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and Tinnevelly, in the south, are comparatively least afflicted. In South Arcot, the rainfall since the middle of October, though not heavy, has been seasonable, and as far as we have been informed, the crops are fair and likely to succeed. Some remissions of revenue will be necessary, but we do not anticipate immediate distress. In Tanjore, the ryots have reaped a fair crop under the river-freshes of the south-west monsoon, and though the October crop has languished, and will not give a full yield, yet it has been preserved so far by timely rainfall, and it may now be hoped that it will be saved. The portion of the district regarding which anxiety is felt is the Pattukottah taluk, a high-lying tract on the Madura frontier, the condition of which the collector has been instructed carefully to watch. In Trichinopoly the river-irrigated tracts are doing fairly well, and the collector has reported that though prices are very high owing to exportation, there is no scarcity, and as yet no distress calling for special measures. In Tinnevelly there have been seasonable showers well diffused, and it is hoped that even the unirrigated crops will be saved. The wet crops are safe. The collector, however, appears anxious about the condition of the labouring classes, and we are expecting further reports.

'In Nellore, Chingleput, North Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore, and Madura there will be wide-spread and severe distress. In Kistna anxiety was chiefly felt as regards the upland taluks, but from recent reports prospects appear to be better there, and the expenditure of local funds in progress is stated to be sufficient for the present. In the Eastern delta, however, there are large numbers wanting employment, and at the urgent request of the collector we have sanctioned a grant of 10,000 rs. for the

Kistna Embankment Works. The district engineer had been directed to push on the Commamore Channel-works in the Western delta, and we learn that these are commenced. In Nellore distress is reported in all taluks except Ongole. The collector has, under our sanction, opened relief works in the worst parts, and there were 32,000 coolies employed on them on the 19th instant. These are exclusive of the East Coast Canal Works, on which we have arranged to employ large numbers from the distressed districts inland, and which are about to commence. The Raja of Venkatagiri, to whom a large part of the district belongs, is organising a scheme of relief works, viz., tank repairs, estimated to cost two lakhs of rupees, and these works will alike benefit the estate, and go far to relieve the distressed ryots.

'In Chingleput, a poor district, and always the first to suffer, the failure of crop will be very extensive, and distress is already felt in all parts of the district. The famine-stricken labourers from this district and the southern parts of Nellore are thronging to the Presidency town in hope of obtaining employment and benefiting by the charity dispensed by some wealthy natives. Their numbers had become so great, and their condition so pitiable, that we have had to open, in Madras, State feeding-houses, where such of them as are too debilitated to work are supplied with food. There are now about 12,000 persons in receipt of such aid, and many more subsisting on private charity. The management of the Government relief-houses is confided to the Commissioner of Police, and we are arranging to organise the private charities, and to supplement them from public funds.

'But measures to check the influx of people into Madras are also necessary, and we have sanctioned a scheme of road-works within a radius of fifteen miles,

which will cost 70,000 rs., and on which the people coming to Madras can be employed. We are about to establish posts on the principal roads leading to the city, where persons in distress can be stopped, and where, their immediate wants being relieved, they can be directed to the relief works. The Junction Canal Work, which we have ordered to be undertaken, will provide adequate employment for the labouring classes of the town itself. In other parts of the Chingleput district, relief works have already been started, and schemes of works, to the extent of 52,000 rs., have been approved. The number of persons employed is 32,086. In the west of the district the conversion of gauge on the Arconum and Conjeveram Railway will give work to a considerable number.

'*North Arcot.*—The southern parts of this district have participated in the rains which have benefited South Arcot. The northern and north-western parts are elevated tracts resembling the Mysore country and the southern parts of Cuddapah, and have been for some months past in a very critical state. The failure of the north-east monsoon has now rendered distress in these tracts, and in the central and eastern parts of this district, certain. The poor in the large towns are already suffering. The collector has submitted a scheme of road works which we have approved, and which are estimated to cost 67,000 rs. These are well distributed, and will prove useful works; and many more will probably be necessary. The works have been started, and the numbers employed on the 19th instant were 15,822.

'*Salem.*—The south-eastern part of Salem (the Ahtoor taluk) has received some rain, and the collector reports that the crops there will be good. The rainfall has been quite insufficient in the rest of the

district, especially in the north, and the yield of the crops will be very small. Anxiety is also felt as regards the water supply. Relief works, chiefly village improvements of a petty kind, have been in progress in the northern taluks for some time, and have given employment to about three thousand persons. These are now being largely extended. In the low country portion of the district (the Talaghat) excepting Ahtur, we have approved a scheme of road works and tank repairs, costing 68,000 rs., and have sanctioned for the improvement and construction of wells, 6,000 rs. The works are now being started; 14,033 persons are already employed.

'*In Coimbatore.*—Here there is little irrigation except under river channels. The crops under the channels from the Cauvery, Bhowani, and Amaravati, are fair. The district has numerous wells, and a considerable extent of crop has been saved by means of them; but the rainfall of both monsoons has been very trifling, and the dry crops will almost entirely fail. The only exceptions are the Pollachy taluk, and other western parts of the district lying under the Ghauts, where favourable showers have fallen. The collector estimates that it will, before next cultivating season, be necessary to provide employment for 150,000 persons in the district. A grant of 25,000 rs. has already been placed at his disposal for utilisation, chiefly on village works, and a further scheme of works has been submitted by him. 11,278 persons were employed on the 19th instant.

'The distress in Madura district will, we fear, be exceptionally severe. The province did well up to September; but since the beginning of October the rainfall has been sadly deficient. There has been more rain in the arid tracts on the coast than in the richer

and more fertile taluks inland, where the fall has not been more than one-third the average, and the crops to be matured by the north-east monsoon have, it is reported, been almost entirely lost. Distress first made itself felt in the Dindigul and Pulni taluks, and a grant of 30,000 rs. has been sanctioned for those taluks. To prevent deaths from want, the sub-collector found it necessary to open three depôts for gratuitous relief, but the people are being drafted to the works which are now open as they become fit to work. The Periacolam taluk has had more rain, but in the district generally extensive works will be necessary. The Court of Wards have sanctioned funds for expenditure in estates under their charge in this district; and large schemes of works have been submitted by the late acting collector. We are, however, awaiting further reports from the permanent collector, who has just rejoined. Emigration of people from the Madura, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and Tinnevelly districts, in search of employment on the plantations in Ceylon, is attaining large dimensions, and affords a satisfactory outlet for our distressed population. Special arrangements have been made for the care of these persons at Paumben, one of the chief ports of departure for Ceylon.

'We now turn to the ceded districts and Kurnool, in which, as already reported to your Lordship, extensive operations for relief have been in progress for some months. The number of persons of all ages and sexes employed on relief works in the Bellary district has now reached 238,000, and the number incapable of work, but receiving gratuitous relief, is 15,300. These numbers are very high, but the works are scattered over the whole district, and there are no large concourses of people except in the vicinity of Bellary itself, where some 60,000 are employed. A special officer, Mr. Price,

has successfully organised this very large number of labourers. Medical aid has been sent to the district, and sanitation is provided for. Mr. Thornhill, the First Member of the Board of Revenue, has completed a second prolonged tour in the district, and from his reports and others that have reached us, we think we may assert that the distress has been grappled with in time.

'The number of coolies employed on the relief works in Kurnool has enormously increased. They must now be stated at from 160,000 to 170,000 on relief works. The Hon. D. Arbuthnot, Second Member of the Board of Revenue, has been deputed to this district, and after passing through the western and southern taluks, and organising relief works there on a large scale, is now in Markapur. The distress in the Kurnool district is most severe, and there have been some deaths from exhaustion and fatigue in chuttrums and halting places; but Mr. Arbuthnot has issued orders to the village officers to care for destitute wanderers in immediate want and to provide them food at the State expense. We have caused similar orders to be promulgated in all districts.

'In Cuddapah there is no change except an increase in the number seeking employment. Those on the relief works were, according to the most recent returns, 80,029. Of them about half are employed in the subdivision (Madanapally, Kadiri, Royachoti, and Voilpad), and the remainder in the north-western, northern, and central part of the district.

'Our most serious anxiety and our greatest difficulty will be to secure the transport of grain to the outlying portions of districts which are beyond the reach of railway communications.

'Our railway system, though of limited extent, has

enormously facilitated the supply of grain to those parts of the country which are suffering most serious distress, such as Bellary and Cuddapah; and it is aiding in the west and south in the transmission of food to North Arcot and Coimbatore. But while the railway is a powerful auxiliary, it has equalised prices to a great extent all over the country, and has produced almost everywhere famine-rates. The task before us is to secure a constant flow of grain from the terminal railway stations to the outlying districts, in which we have numerous relief works, and we have started a special agency for this purpose. At present the means of local transport have been almost sufficient to distribute the grain which is being brought by the railway; but we are aware that this will be our great difficulty hereafter, and our most earnest attention is being directed to this question.

'We enclose for your Lordship's information copies of the season telegrams received at Council on the 19th instant, and also a statement showing the total grants for relief works which have been placed at the disposal of district officers to date. The amount is 50,09,409 rs.

'It is very difficult to furnish to your Lordship an accurate statement of the financial requirements of this Presidency in consequence of the disastrous failure of the seasons.

'The nearest approximate estimate that we have received is contained in a recent report furnished to us by the Board of Revenue. This estimate has been framed to meet the wants until September 1877, though, as explained by the Board, special provision up to so late a date will be required for a few districts only, and is based roughly on the largest item of expenditure, relief wages. It must, however, be borne in mind that there must necessarily be other heavy collateral charges.

The number for whom provision has to be made, as calculated by the Board, is as follows, and the total cost in rupees is 341,05,875, or 3½ millions sterling. At this early period we do not venture to pledge ourselves to any estimate formed on the rough data at hand.

	Number.	Amount.
December	5,77,000	22,35,875
January	8,20,000	32,77,500
February	10,95,000	38,32,500
March	12,90,000	49,98,750
April	14,05,000	52,68,750
May	13,55,000	52,50,625
June	11,40,000	42,75,000
July	7,80,000	30,22,500
August	4,05,000	15,69,375
September	1,05,000	3,75,000
		Rs. 3,41,05,875

'A sudden change of season would seriously, even at this late date, modify such calculations; but the Board of Revenue are in a position to form the best judgment on this question, and we think it our duty to submit to their estimate.'

In the midst of much indignation in Madras the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos left his Presidency to proceed to take part in the ceremonies at Delhi in connection with the proclamation of Her Majesty as Empress of India. Good resulted from the visit, which was looked upon in Madras with great disfavour at the time, as by means of personal conference with the Governors of the affected Presidencies, the Government of India for the first time realised the magnitude of the calamity, and the great efforts needed to conduct successfully the campaign which had been undertaken.

Up to this time, the end of December 1876, the Madras Government had expended :—

	£
On relief	372,500
On purchase of grain . .	302,400
	£674,900

There were other items, such as transport, agency, and local purchases of grain, which brought up the total to nearly three-quarters of a million sterling.

CHAPTER II.

THE MONTH OF JANUARY 1877.

'Under the ryots are the farm labourers, often holding some fields of their own, but adding to their livelihood by labouring in the fields of their neighbours. They form a large class, having interests bound up with those of the superior ryots. They, together with their wives and growing children, are strong to labour. But now their vocation is gone for a time. There is no weeding or tending wanted for the wretched crops. There is no harvesting to be done. The fields cannot be tilled for lack of moisture. The plough is unemployed. The oxen are straying in quest of fodder. . . . . Below these, in all the villages there are low-caste or caste-less people in a very varying condition—often in tolerably good case, often again living in squalor and degradation, continuing in scarceness at the best of times, and subsisting within the narrowest margin of existence in bad seasons. It was to be feared that from these outcasts of the social system charitable sympathy would be withheld by the better classes. There are also various gipsy clans habitually gathering the wild fruits of the forests, and eking out a precarious subsistence by disposing of jungle produce and doing chance work in the villages. On behalf of these poor untamable wanderers anxiety would be excited lest both the wild produce and the work should fail in a year like this.'
—Sir Richard Temple, *On the Effects of the Drought.*

India is a land of startling contrasts, but extremes were never more vividly noted than in the scenes which were being witnessed on the plains of Delhi in the north, and in the districts in the south, in the early days of January 1877. The spectacular splendour of the Imperial Assemblage surpassed anything of the kind that the continent had ever known: the Field of the Cloth of Gold was not more magnificent. Similarly, while the assemblage was being held, but, owing to the tardiness with which returns are prepared and forwarded to headquarters, in a great measure unknown to those who were

taking part in the ceremonies, unequalled scenes of death and disaster were occurring south and west of the Kistna delta.

Whilst preparations were being made for the proclamation of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain as Empress of India, and whilst the ceremonies were actually in progress, 65,000 subjects of the Queen-Empress died of starvation and the diseases caused by insufficient nourishment, in the Madras Presidency alone. Thirteen thousand must similarly have perished in the province of Mysore, but no record of deaths month by month has been published; how many died in Bombay Presidency is unknown, for here, too, reticence was displayed respecting mortality whilst scarcity and want were prevalent. The terrible character of the death-rate in the districts of Southern India was not known to the Viceroy and the Governors and Councillors who were assembled at Delhi, but enough was known to enable them to feel that they were face to face with the greatest disaster arising from drought which had visited India during the century. It was intended that a portion of the business transacted at Delhi should be consultations on State affairs, the presence of high dignitaries from all parts of the Empire rendering this feasible. The matter for chief consideration was the famine in Western and Southern India, and owing partly to divergent counsels and partly to the fact that one member of the Government (Sir John Strachey) had only just arrived in the country, it was of the highest importance that a conference on this subject should be held.

On the morning of January 5 the Famine Council met. There were present H.E. the Viceroy and Governor-General, the Governors of Madras and Bombay, the members of the Vice-regal Council, and Sir Richard Temple, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and Governor-

designate of Bombay. Facts such as have already been detailed were considered, the various policies which had been adopted in Madras and Bombay were discussed, and the supreme authorities accepted the responsibility of meeting the disaster from Imperial finances. It was complained, however, that sufficient information was not available regarding the actual state of things in Madras; it was further not concealed that a good deal of dissatisfaction was felt with the manner in which the disaster had so far been grappled with in the Southern Presidency. Reference was also made to the fear that expenditure was more profuse than it need be, and that stricter economy was necessary. The Government of India professed full confidence in the local Government, but they wished to have some adequate control over the policy carried out: how to obtain this was the difficulty. The problem had occasioned some anxiety before the Council was held. In course of conversation, however, Sir John Strachey suggested a plan by which the wishes of Government could be met.

'Send Sir Richard Temple as delegate,' said Sir John Strachey. 'He has had the requisite experience in dealing with famines. He also understands the straitened condition of our finances, and will carry out an economical policy.'

His Excellency the Viceroy, to whom the suggestion was made, at once approved of it, and the proposal was laid before the Council. His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, the Governor of Madras, acquiesced in the arrangement. His Grace had recognised the gravity of the situation in his Presidency, appreciated also the difficulty of the Supreme Government, and loyally agreed to a plan which had the appearance of supersession of himself. Sir Richard Temple's delegation was mainly intended for Madras and Mysore, but

to save appearances he was instructed also to visit Bombay and report upon the prospects there. The duty to which he was designated was at once accepted by Sir Richard Temple, and he expressed his readiness to proceed on the projected tour with the least possible delay.

In the meantime, the Council at an end, the Governor of Madras returned to his tent, and informed the members of his suite of the arrangement which had been made. The delegation was not looked upon with a favourable eye there, and later in the day his Grace beseeched the Viceroy that the proposal might not be carried out. It was too late, however, to make any change ; the appointment had been gazetted, and Sir Richard Temple was already making preparations for starting on his tour. Much discontent was felt and expressed in India generally when the appointment became known. Sir Richard Temple was popular neither with officials nor publicists, and whilst all recognised the ability of the delegate, few were satisfied of the wisdom of the choice. Sir Richard was charged with extravagant expenditure in Behar in the famine of 1874, and it was feared that he would indulge in large outlay in 1877. But they who argued thus did not know the delegate so well as did they who had sent him. Sir Richard was commissioned to the distressed districts to economise, and it was known by the Government of India that he would exercise economy. The action taken, also—though not intended by the Government of India as such—was looked upon as a condemnation of the action of the Madras authorities, and it was anticipated that, having been virtually superseded, his Grace the Governor would take an early opportunity of resigning. This, however, the Duke of Buckingham did not do, but loyally remained at his post, and subsequently did exceedingly good service to his Presidency.

The estimate which had been formed at Delhi of the calamity may be gathered from certain passages in the telegram which was sent from the camp to the Secretary of State. 'We have fully discussed,' said the Viceroy in behalf of himself and his Council, 'with the Governors of Madras and Bombay, the present position of affairs in respective Presidencies, and have decided on sending Sir Richard Temple to visit distressed tracts in both Presidencies and confer with the two Governments. The situation is very grave, especially in Madras, where 13 districts out of 21, containing a population of 20 millions, are more or less affected. 'We consider the policy of making large purchases of grain, adopted by Madras Government, to be very erroneous, and calculated seriously to interfere with operations of trade and so to intensify our difficulties a few months hence. We have instructed the Governor to abandon this policy, and shall take means to make known publicly our intention to leave trade unfettered. The number on relief works in Madras exceed 840,000, in Bombay 250,000. We apprehend that in Madras admission to the works has not been sufficiently restricted, and that the actual pressure may, therefore, be less than the numbers would indicate. But on this point and on others Sir Richard Temple's inspection will enable us to form an opinion. The latest Madras estimate of expenditure and loss of revenue amounts to about five millions. One or two isolated cases of death appear to have occurred in Madras Presidency. No efforts have been wanting on part of local Governments to prevent mortality. Cholera bad in some districts, especially Kurnool and Belgaum.'

This was not an adequate description of the disaster, as it is now known to have existed at that date, in this representation. The death-rate in the Madras districts from October to December had increased greatly, as the

returns from the various distressed districts testified. None of these facts, however, were before the conference at Delhi, nor were the records of deaths from starvation which Mr. Arbuthnot observed in Kurnool in November. There can be no doubt that many deaths from want had occurred prior to January, and the circumstance that they were not known is proof of the inadequacy of control over the disaster.

In a despatch from the Government of India to the Secretary of State, dated January 12, an admirable *précis* of the extent and intensity of the distress was given, and the admission was made that the prospect was 'serious in the extreme.' Whilst this was acknowledged, other points required consideration. Among them was this :—'While the necessity of preventing, as far as practicable, death by starvation is paramount, the financial embarrassment which must in any case arise, will be most difficult to overcome, and any departure from the most rigid economy, or from the principles in dealing with famine which experience has confirmed as sound, may aggravate it to a degree which cannot be estimated.' This was alluded to at greater length in the instructions issued to Sir Richard Temple.[1] Cer-

[1] See Appendix for the text of this document. The chief points of the instructions were these:—Every effort is to be made for the prevention of deaths by famine. Severe economy in relief should be practised. Indiscriminate charity on the part of individuals is admitted to be bad, but on the part of Government is worse. A Government has no better right in a time of scarcity than at any other times to attempt the task of preventing all suffering, and of giving general relief to the poorer classes of the community.

The numbers on relief works are so great that there is reason to fear that many persons must be employed who without such relief could sustain themselves, for a time at least. The collection of such numbers should be restricted on works where labour is not exacted, where supervision is wanting, and where people can obtain for the asking, and in return for next to no work at all, wages in money or in grain. No time should be lost in giving to the people, to the greatest extent practicable, the means of employment

tain passages in these instructions caused much public controversy, and occasioned some acrid correspondence between the Supreme and Bombay Governments, to be noticed in the section of this work giving a narrative of the famine in the Western Presidency. In Madras, whilst the instructions were much and severely criticised, the central principles were recognised as sound and satisfactory. Through an unfortunate mistake in the Secretariat, which became the parent of much subsequent misunderstanding, a copy of these instructions was not forwarded to the Government of Madras until nearly two months after they had been issued. This was accidental, but in the strained relations which subsequently existed, *malice prepense* was not unnaturally suspected.

Sir Richard Temple was nominated to his new duty on January 5. On the 9th he was already on tour. It is impossible to avoid noticing the fact that whilst the delegate started on his mission at once, and the Governor of Bombay hastened with all speed to the seat of his Government, the Duke of Buckingham and

on large public works, which need not always be in the distressed districts or near the homes of the people.

The Government may be driven to set up petty relief works near the homes of the people, but not until distress becomes extreme, or a state of famine has been reached.

There is great advantage in paying relief labour in money (not in grain) wherever and so long as this mode of payment is practicable. But if money payment is not practicable, there is no more objection to Government purchasing grain for payment, than there is to its making purchases through the commissariat for troops.

There is to be no interference of any kind on the part of Government with the object of reducing the price of food. Inquiry should be made as to how far private trade, if unfettered, can supply the wants of the country.

In certain localities remote from railways, and large markets which private trade is unable to reach, it may become necessary for Government to intervene.

The transport of grain by the trade, by railways, by roads in the interior, and by the sea-ports, should be carefully observed.

Chandos lingered at Lucknow,—stayed at a number of places *en route* to Madras, and did not reach the Presidency till several days after Sir Richard Temple had been in some of the distressed districts. This caused much severe comment at the time. The staff of the Famine Delegate consisted of Mr. C. E. Bernard, C.S.I., specially appointed, an officer of much experience and possessing a kindly heart, Captain Bisset, R.E., of railway knowledge, Mr. C. Buckland, private secretary, and Dr. Harvey. With a rapidity unexampled, and at too great a speed to secure the object in view, viz., a thorough acquaintance with the real state of the country, Sir Richard and his staff literally 'raced' over the affected districts, caused reductions to be made in gratuitous relief, struck large numbers of people off works, wrote numberless and very long minutes and memoranda, and in three months finished their task. The Delegate's energy was praiseworthy, his intentions admirable, but his performances occasionally otherwise. It was impossible, in the hurried visits his Excellency made to districts, and in his conversations with officials, for him to adequately grasp the real facts of the situation. It will be shown that the statements in the delegate's despatches are not borne out by independent observations, and that the death-rate contradicts the *couleur-de-rose* view which he took. It does not seem unfair to the Delegate, judging him from his minutes, to assume that he went to Madras with the preconceived idea that the calamity had been exaggerated, that it was being inadequately met, and that, therefore, facts were, unconsciously may be, squared with this theory.

He expected to see a certain state of things, and he saw that—that and none other. Further, his personal manner was not conciliatory; he was occasionally injudicious. It will not be surprising, therefore, to find

that the Madras portion of his tour was productive of much illwill and a great deal of friction. Particulars indicating these unpleasing facts will be given in due course.

Famine prevention work had now become very great, and officers were over-taxed in the endeavour to perform their ordinary duties, and at the same time grapple with distress in the manner in which it was desirable this should be done. Compared with the figures quoted, as showing the amount of distress to be relieved at the end of 1876, the state of things when Sir Richard Temple entered (January 15) the Presidency, was as follows :—

Number on Relief Works	1,055,641
Gratuitously fed	12,433
Total . . .	1,068,074

In and near the town of Madras camps had been established, and the most active efforts were made to cope effectually with the distress which daily manifested itself in increasing measure.

The first district visited by Sir Richard Temple was Kurnool, that place being reached *viâ* Hyderabad, where, 'so far as he was able to judge, the arrangements made to meet the distress and the diagnosis of the coming trouble were creditable to the prudence and foresight of the Nizam's Government.' This district had been reported upon by the Hon. Mr. Arbuthnot in December, whose report has been quoted. A conference was held on the 14th and 15th between Sir Richard and his staff and the collector and his chief assistants, with several non-official gentlemen. What passed is contained in a memorandum by Mr. Bernard. It was found that all the ordinary crops (including cotton) for 1876-77 had failed utterly, save only in irrigated lands.

The average rainfall is 32½ inches: only 5½ had fallen.

912,000 people were affected. There had been an immense increase of thefts and dacoities in the autumn, which almost ceased when relief works had everywhere been opened. Prices were nearly five times their ordinary rate. Relief was being mostly given in the shape of wages for work on 250 miles of roads, tank digging, collecting gravel, etc. All who had applied for work were given it, and at one time 320,338—over 33 per cent. of the population—were employed, 3 annas per day being given in some cases to men, and proportionately less to women and children. 'The greater majority of the numbers seen on works by Sir Richard,' says Mr. Bernard, 'were women and children. None of these bore any signs of present or past want, and their clothing was certainly better than that of ordinary labourers in other parts of India. The then expenditure was about 30,000 rs. per diem; the outlay to date 13 lakhs. The engineering staff consisted of one engineer, three assistants, eight overseers (one for each taluk), four extra being expected from other districts.' Neither task nor piecework had been exacted from the labourers, who spent a certain number of hours on or near the works, and returned to their homes, some of them seven or eight miles off, in the evening. A revenue inspector, on 20 rs. per month, had charge of a gang of 10,000 workmen. Mr. Davidson (the new collector), naturally, was not satisfied with this state of affairs, and was endeavouring to put things in order. Gratuitous relief (from private charity) was being given to about 6,000 indigent persons in Kurnool and Cumbum. Certain suggestions, some of which were acted upon, were made for controlling the distress in Kurnool.

On January 19, Sir Richard Temple, having visited

the Ceded districts—comprising Kurnool, Bellary, and Cuddapah—an area of 26,000 square miles in five days! —in a minute submits certain proposals bearing mainly on considerations of expense. They are, briefly, these: To stop all fresh admissions to relief works in these districts, save under a certificate from an officer not lower than deputy tahsildar; to discharge all at present on relief works who are not in absolute danger of starvation if not supported by Government; to reduce the wages from two annas to one and a half anna per diem, and proportionately less for women and children; and to impress on village officials the responsibility of reporting dangerous cases of distress. The reduction of wages was virtually the great experimental measure as to whether a man could work on one pound of rice per diem, with a small quantity of condiments. Sir Richard's arguments are not given here, as they will more fittingly appear in the section devoted to the discussion of this important economic question.

Whilst Sir Richard Temple was at Bellary, he had the opportunity of meeting and conversing with a large number of gentlemen officially and non-officially connected with the district.[1] Mr. Bernard described the

[1] Mr. G. Thornhill, First Member of the Revenue Board, who kindly accompanied Sir Richard from Gooty.

Mr. G. H. Master, Collector of Bellary for the last seven years.

Mr. Cox, C.S., who joined the district for relief works only a few days previous.

Major Hicks, who for some years has been District Superintendent of Police, Bellary, and who was then managing the transport of Government grain from the railway to the interior.

Mr. Legatt, the Executive Engineer, and several assistants and subordinates, whom Sir Richard met on the different relief works which he visited.

Messrs. Harvey and Sabapathy, a Bellary firm which deals in country produce.

V. Venkata Chulum, Deputy Collector of Hospett, who had charge of three western taluks of Hospett, Havrinhudgally, and Harpinhally.

Moorgeshum Modelliar, Deputy Collector, living at Bellary, but in

impressions formed on the Delegate's mind in a memorandum which may be thus briefly summarised: The district has an area of 11,000 square miles, divided into 15 taluks: population, 1,668,000. The failure of the harvest was total, not being more than 'half-an-anna crop,' *i.e.* one thirty-second of an ordinary yield; this, such as it was, had only been secured on lands watered by wells, tanks, or channels from the Toongabudra river. From Gooty to Bellary, and for several miles around Bellary itself, Sir Richard said that 'the country was almost entirely bare of all crop or stubble, and that there was no sign of fodder or grass.' Cholum ordinarily sells at 23 seers per rupee; it was then 8 at Bellary itself, and dearer in the interior. Relief in the western taluks began in July, and was conducted precisely as in Kurnool. The number employed on works was enormous, and had been increasing at the rate of 30,000 a week: at this time 382,385, or 23 per cent. of the population, were on relief wages. The total expenditure to the beginning of January had been 22 lakhs, and the monthly expenditure at the time of Sir Richard's visit 14 lakhs. The number on gratuitous relief was 45,565, nearly 19,000 being in the taluk of Hindapur. The condition of the cattle was critical: one fourth were said to have died, and it was thought more than half would perish before June unless heavy showers fell in January.

It was authenticated that formerly well-to-do ryots

charge of relief work in the south-western taluks of Rayudroog and Kudligi.

Mr. Agar, in relief charge of the head-quarter taluk.

The Deputy-Collector at head-quarters, and other head-quarter officials all furnished information. But Mr. Ross, C.S., the Assistant in charge of the remote southern taluks of Pennakonda, Hindapur, and Madaksira, was at his post in Pennakonda, and therefore some of the facts regarding the condition of that part of the district remain to be cleared up.

had on this occasion sold bullocks in the Bellary market at one rupee a head, or for eight seers of cholum. It was expected that sixteen out of twenty-three lakhs of revenue would have to be suspended, of which a large proportion must be remitted. The question of the Government purchase of grain was also commented upon.

In Cuddapah, one-fourth of the crop having been saved, and there being some in the ground, the distress was not so great in Sir Richard Temple's opinion (p. 46, B. B. II.), as in Bellary and Kurnool. The markets were well supplied, and the best part of the cattle safe. 'Out of a population of 1,350,000, there are 200,000 persons on relief, or one eighth on relief works.' The proportion to the population in the different taluks was too great to be satisfactorily accounted for, viz., 28 per cent. in Kadiri, 5 in Palumpett. Under the collector, near head-quarters, the management was stricter than at Madanapully—in the sub-collectorate, where Sir Richard states he believed 'an excessive expenditure was going on—as to which reconsideration was urgently called for.' Two other minutes regarding this district were penned by Mr. Bernard on the 19th, and Sir Richard on January 22. The position of the district is fully reviewed. The suggestion is made that some officer should be appointed vested with full powers under the Government of Madras to take charge of operations in the Ceded districts, and to reside therein.

Hitherto the Delegate had found occasion only for censure. Regarding North Arcot, however, he telegraphed to Calcutta, 'For North Arcot relief of distress is careful and cheap. Contrast remarkable with Cuddapah.' Mr. Bernard's memorandum on this district may be thus summarised. The district has an area of

7,139 square miles, divided into 9 taluks, exclusive of 13 Zemindaree estates, some of which are very large. Population, 2,015,270, one third of whom belong to the estates. The rainfall in 1874-75 (average) was fifty inches; in 1875-76, twenty-three inches; in 1876-77, sixteen inches. In some taluks there was much less than sixteen inches even. Prices were high, but they had been higher. The people are described as fairly well off. 'The collector had for long abstained from opening relief works, because he thought they were not absolutely necessary. There were signs of uneasiness and distress in the shape of dacoities and robberies, and the police officials, high and low, much urged him to interfere, saying that the people were starving.' Revenue officials confirmed the collector in his opinion 'that the time for administering Government relief had not yet come.' 'One or two deaths were reported by the police as caused by starvation, but the collector, after enquiry, satisfied himself that the deaths in question were due to ordinary natural causes.' 'In December some works had been opened, and 40,000 people were employed upon them. Some few at Vellore were in a depressed physical condition when they first came on to the works, but the rest were and still are in good condition.' Sir Richard saw about 3,000 relief labourers at work at Vellore, who, as a body, seemed to him to be more in need of relief and poorer altogether than any relief gangs he had seen in the Madras Presidency. The collector stated that 80,000 were ready to come on the works, if only he would let them; and he intimated he would have 150,000 at the worst period. There was little or no gratuitous relief afforded when Sir Richard visited Vellore and inspected the pauper recipients there. He found many of them in a really emaciated condition. The collector was satisfied that in the interior

the village officials would watch and bring up for relief people who were in danger of starving. There was cause for apprehension in regard to both cattle and water, the latter being already short in Vellore itself.

An interpolation must be pardoned here. This is decidedly the most alarming account of the state of affairs yet furnished, so far as the salvation of life was concerned; but besides reporting favourably of the district, the delegate supported the collector in his do-nothing policy. When the people of North Arcot found there was no relief for them at home, they wandered to Madras, or perished by the roadside. In a minute on North Arcot which accompanied his secretary's memorandum, Sir Richard said: 'The district has suffered a severe loss of harvest from drought; not more than four annas of the total harvest have been saved. It is almost entirely surrounded by distressed districts. It has several large towns, inhabited by a poor population. There are many signs of coming distress upon a large scale: nevertheless the collector, Mr. Whiteside, has managed so far to hold his hand as to give relief to only a limited number. It is true that great pressure has been and is being put upon him by the people to extend relief operations, and he may very shortly have to do so. But the fact remains that on January 20 there are not more than 40,000 persons receiving relief from Government, and the total expenditure is 66,000 rs.' Sir Richard contrasts this with the extent of relief in the neighbouring district of Cuddapah, which, with a smaller population and a not very much worse harvest than North Arcot, had 200,000 on works, with an expenditure of 600,000 rs. Sir Richard is of opinion that as affecting the scarcity there are no such differences between the circumstances of the two districts as can satisfactorily account for this result,

unless it be in difference of management. If North Arcot had been managed like Cuddapah, its expenditure would have been 675,000 rs. by January 20, and 225,000 should have been on relief. Had Cuddapah been managed like North Arcot, six lakhs would have been saved. . . . Inasmuch as there has been no loss of life proved to result from starvation in North Arcot, it would seem to follow that the collector has done enough.[1]

On January 22 another minute on the reduced ration appeared, in which Sir Richard showed that, if adopted, a saving of one fourth of expenditure would result. 'This is, I submit,' he remarks, 'an important consideration financially, which cannot be lightly set aside.' In two memoranda, dated January 21 and 22, respectively, Mr. Bernard briefly reviews the condition (1) of the Coimbatore, and (2) of the Trichinopoly districts. Sir Richard was not able to visit them personally. The distress in the first-named district was localised to three central taluks, in which it was but partial, whilst the second was but little affected. Adequate arrangements had been made in both, in case matters changed for the worse.

Sir Richard Temple visited Madura, and had conferences with the local officers during January 22 and 24. The district has a population of 2,250,000. Average rainfall twenty-four inches: in 1876 in some places

[1] *Per contra*, it may be stated that the death-rate in North Arcot in August—December 1876, compared with the previous year, was very greatly increased. Further, it is very probable that a large portion of Madras town relief is really debitable to North Arcot. It is well known that many thousands of people proceeded to Cuddapah, Madanapully, and Madras, where work and food were provided for them. Several thousands of them died miserably in the town relief hospitals of nothing else than the resultants of prolonged hunger. It was proved, partly by enquiries, partly by the number of relegations, that many 'wanderers' in Madras were from North Arcot.

only five inches; nowhere twelve inches. Prices were as follows:

	No. of seers	per rupee
	January 13, 1877.	Average in ordinary years
2nd soft rice	7¾	16
Cholum	8½	29
Ragi	10¾	35

Markets were filled, mostly with Bengal rice; 5,531 on relief works. Collector expected a rush on the works in the south, 'where the people are very badly off, and for two months past have prayed to have relief works opened.' 'If it had not been for the outlet by emigration to Ceylon, there would have been danger of starvation down there before now.' The rate of wages on relief works was two annas per diem. In ordinary times no one would accept less than four or five annas per day; and the collector was of opinion that a Madura man must be feeling some pressure before he goes on relief works at two annas. The people who were on works were not in a specially depressed physical condition. There had been no difficulty in maintaining the cattle. The collector expected he would have to remit fifteen out of his twenty-four lakhs of revenue.

The Delegate made a brief, very brief, visit to Tinnevelly, of which Mr. Bernard reports that prices were almost double. 'As yet the condition of the people even in the distressed districts is by no means depressed; but some weeks ago it became clear that in the distressed taluks were a certain number of people who had not emigrated, who had no food, and who had no means of earning any. Accordingly, works were opened, and 2,500 labourers were then employed. Sir Richard found that while Mr. McQuhae, the collector of Madura, estimated he would not at the worst season have more

than 20,000 on relief works, Mr. Stuart, collector of Tinnevelly, which has a smaller population, thought 150,000 would have to be provided for.' Sir Richard Temple thought these differences arose from the fact that in Madura it is now understood that relief is to be afforded only for the purpose of avoiding danger of starvation, whereas, in Tinnevelly, it seems to have been thought distress also must be prevented.

On January 25 the Delegate visited Salem. Prices ranged from double to treble ordinary rates. The rainfall, on which all depended, was for the past year eighteen inches instead of thirty inches, while the north-east monsoon, or the October fall, had been short all over the district, two inches falling where ten inches were needed. 'There have been no real cases of starvation, but in the northern taluks there was distress among the poorer classes, and works had been opened for two months. The labourers were not considered in depressed physical condition, though not so stout as in ordinary years. The cattle were as yet fairly well off, and many having been driven to the Shevaroy hills, they will probably get through the present crisis sufficiently well.'

Three days later the Delegate reached Chingleput, the district in which the city of Madras is situated. The district is small, having an area of 2,753 square miles, and a population of 938,134. This was its third bad season: the rainfall the previous year had been but sixteen as against thirty-four inches. The failure of the crops had been worst in the Chingleput, Conjeveram, and Ponnery taluks, in which those under irrigation channels from the Palar river had alone been saved. Relief works (mostly roads) had been opened in December, but 'in some cases the people were in a physically reduced state when they first came on the works.' About 14,000 were then thus employed, and in April

it was expected 70,000 souls would have to be similarly provided for. Sir Richard describes the Madras town relief camps (three in the city and one at Red Hills) as then containing a population of 10,000 immigrant pariah families, mostly from the neighbouring districts of Chingleput, North Arcot, Nellore, and Cuddapah, 'who had come down to Madras to seek for work and food, either because relief works near their homes had not been opened, or because they had heard rumours of charity to be had there for the asking. Many of them had walked far, . . . and had become much reduced.' 25,000 had then been picked off the streets by the police, fed up in camps, and set to work. 'A considerable number of women and children had been observed at each of these camps in an emaciated condition.' In the relief hospitals hundreds were being treated for what the medical officer called famine diarrhœa, brought on or aggravated by want of food. This was identifiable with the complaint which was so fatal in 1869, in the Rajputana famine. 'The death rate was very high, and to some of them the relief came too late.' There had been some, but not many, cases of cholera. A liberal diet of 1½ lbs. of rice and half a pint of vegetable curry was allowed per diem to adults. The administrative arrangements, under the Police Commissioner, Colonel Drever, were good, and a medical officer with a sufficient staff managed the hospital sanitation. The cost of these camps was considerable. A brief memorandum by Mr. Bernard on a railway from Chingleput to Conjeveram as a relief work closes the despatch-writing of the delegate for January.

It may now be well to glance at the distress through the spectacles of the Madras Government. One of the first efforts of this Government in January was an endeavour to turn to good account the disaster with

which they were face to face. The Governor's Council had determined to make small advances to ryots for the sinking of wells and other agricultural improvements, but the procedure was too cumbersome for the existing emergency. The Government of India was therefore applied to, that advances might be made on simple agreements. The arrangement involved in this proposal was a real famine panacea, and the Madras Council were quite justified in telling the Secretary of State, as they did, that if their request were acceded to 'much advantage to the country and to the State would accrue.' The relief asked for was promptly given in the first week of the year. One of the most experienced officers in the Presidency (Mr. R. K. Puckle) was deputed to visit the distressed districts, so that increased supervising agency for the daily enlarged numbers of persons seeking relief might be provided.

In the second week of the year the authorities had to tell of increasing numbers flocking to relief works, and in three districts—Bellary, Kurnool, and Cuddapah—nearly a million of persons were compelled to trust to the action of Government for their existence. Regarding supervision, which afterwards caused much disagreement between the supreme and local authorities, it is stated of this period:—

'In the thirteenth paragraph of our last despatch to the Secretary of State, we stated that we were preparing instructions to district officers to prevent waste and idleness on the State relief works. We have since conferred with Mr. Puckle, and despatched him to the Ceded districts, accompanied by the most experienced native assistant we could depute, for the purpose of examining the manner in which the works in progress there are being carried out, and of elaborating an efficient system of controlling and auditing expenditure on

the spot. We hope in a short time to be in a position to report that the instructions have been issued.'

For the same week reports from each of the districts gave the following particulars regarding the health of human beings and of cattle:

District	Health of Population	Condition of Cattle
Ganjam . .	Cholera	Cattle disease
Vizagapatam .	Cholera, fever . . .	Healthy
Godaveri . .	Fever	Cattle disease
Kistna . . .	Cholera, fever . . .	Do.
Nellore . . .	681 cholera, small pox	Cattle suffering from want of fodder
Cuddapah . .	564 cholera	1,460 cattle died from want of fodder and disease
Kurnool . .	291 cholera	Cattle dying for want of fodder
Bellary . . .	Do. do.	Healthy
North Arcot .	Cholera, fever . . .	Cattle dying for want of fodder
Chingleput .	Cholera, small pox, fever	Pasture and water scarce
Madras . . .	Cholera, small pox, fever, dysentery .	Foot and mouth disease
South Arcot .	Cholera	Cattle disease; cattle weak
Salem . . .	Do.	Foot and mouth disease
Trichinopoly .	569 cholera, small pox	Healthy
Tanjore . .	383 cholera	Do.
Coimbatore .	493 cholera	Cattle deteriorating
Madura . . .	319 do.	Cattle want fodder and water
Tinnevelly . .	Cholera	Healthy
Niligris . . .	Good	
Malabar . .	2 cholera	Cattle disease
South Canara .	Small pox	Healthy

The week after, Sir Richard Temple's arrival in the Presidency town was stated, and the Government acknowledged to have received his various suggestions, and promised 'consideration' of them, and said they would report in the following week the action taken upon them. The suggestions were contained in the despatches summarised in preceding pages, copies of which were forwarded simultaneously to Calcutta and Madras.

What is most remarkable in the reports, for this month, both of the Delegate of the Government of India and the Council at Madras, is the manner in which such subjects as the increase of the death-rate and the intensification of individual suffering are ignored, as though both or either were not the concomitants of the distress which was being coped with. Yet during this month the death-rate was very high and the suffering extremely great. In the affected districts they were of an alarming nature. It is true these details did not, in the ordinary routine, reach the Council of the Governor of Madras till six weeks later, but the state of things they typify—a total increased death-rate of nearly sixty thousand on the previous year,—ought to have attracted the attention of the officials, and have been reported to supreme authority.[1]

Much practice in minute writing has given to Sir Richard Temple a facility of composition and a habit of comprehending facts which few publicists in India possess. An estimate of the extent of mischief caused by the failure of rains, made by Sir Richard at the close of his journeys, may for the sake of enabling the reader to note the extent and kind of distress, be given.

He wrote :—'In regard to the extent of the droughts

[1] Many of these deaths, though not reported as from actual starvation, were certainly due to want of food. The correspondent of the *Friend of India* says :—'Dr. Ross of Nellore told me that he had not found the dropsy as invariably fatal as other medical men have represented it to be ; he seemed to think its ending in death or not depended on the extent to which the diarrhœa that preceded it had gone. I asked him if he would give me his opinion whether the death of a starved person, the immediate cause of which was diarrhœa, or some other disease, should fairly be put down to starvation, and he said, "Unquestionably, yes." "Death," he added, "was very rarely caused by mere *asthenia*, or want of life ; some part of the body was nearly always attacked by disease previously to dissolution, and that disease could not really be called the cause of death." This is the view that has guided me all along in what I have written about starvation. The cause of death is that which makes recovery hopeless, not the disease that shows itself when a man is as good as dead already.'

and the failure of the harvests, it is necessary to recall the fact that in 1876, throughout the greater part of the Madras Presidency, the south-west monsoon, or the summer rains, were very deficient, and that the north-east monsoon, or autumnal rains, failed still more disastrously. In the northern portion only of the Presidency, that is, in the littoral tract south of Orissa and in the deltas of the Godavery and the Kistna, was the rainfall ordinarily propitious. In the rest of the Presidency, comprising the peninsula of Southern India, the rainfall of the year ranged from 3 to 20 inches, in many large tracts of the worst districts it ranged from 6 to 10 inches, whereas the average annual rainfall in this region may be taken to range from 20 to 40 inches. Even on the western or Malabar coast, where, if anywhere, the rains are expected to be unfailing, the rainfall was measured at only 87 inches, compared with an usual annual average of 126 inches.

'The misfortune which, threatening first in July, and becoming more pronounced month by month, settled down upon the Madras Presidency during November, was aggravated by the similar misfortune which had befallen the Deccan districts of the Bombay Presidency, the greater portion of the Mysore territory, and a portion of the Nizam's dominions.

'The drought began in the north, a little below the river Taptee in Khandeish. In the Bombay Deccan, it became severe in the districts of Ahmednughur, Poona, Satara, Sholapur, and Kaladgi. It was milder in the south Mahratta country near Belgaum and Dharwar, and in the Nizam's territories, around Goolburga and Raichore; but some parts of Dharwar suffered severely. Towards the Madras Presidency it reached the line of the Toongabhadra (or Toombadra) River which joins the Kistna below Kurnool, and

followed the line of the Kistna to the eastern coast. In this latitude (16°), it stretched with more or less intensity almost from sea to sea.

'Within the Madras Presidency, on the right or southern bank of the Toongabhadra river, the drought developed all its most destructive agencies, and showed its greatest force all along the frontier, covering the whole of the districts of Bellary and Kurnool, and the greater part of Cuddapah, and comprising in its desolation all the country above the Ghât mountains. Across the mountains it visited the greater part of the districts of Nellore, Chingleput (including the city of Madras), North Arcot, Salem, Coïmbatore, and Trichinopoly. It caused the Kistna and its affluents to roll down in such diminished volume that the canal from the Toongabhadra near Kurnool, and the great irrigation works of the Masulipatam delta, were stinted in their supply. It made the freshes and floods of the Penair descend in such shrunken proportions that the reservoir and channels of Nellore were nearly deprived of water. It stopped the supply of the Cauvery bank lake, near Arcot, and rendered the dam across the Palar inoperative. It rested for some time on the districts of South Arcot, Tanjore, and Trichinopoly, and threatened them with evil; they were, however, saved, South Arcot mainly by some later rains, and Tanjore and Trichinopoly, partly by the same rains, but chiefly by their canals. It extended itself with havoc throughout the southern peninsula, laying waste the districts of Madura and Tinnevelly, right down to the sea-shore near Cape Comorin, the tracts irrigated from the Tambrapoornee, near Tinnevelly, alone escaping destruction. Though it failed to dry up the harvest of the rich tracts of Malabar and Travancore, or to prevent the Cauvery from filling the canals of the Tanjore delta, yet it rendered them

powerless to send the succour that might otherwise have been expected.

'Thus were injured, more or less seriously, ten large districts of the Madras Presidency, containing a total area of 74,000 square miles, and a population of 16,000,000 souls.

'The whole of the area and of the population did not suffer in an equal degree. It may be stated approximately that 11,000,000 people were distressed in a greater, and 5,000,000 in a lesser, degree.

'In the devastated tracts there are two harvests in the year, one depending on the summer rains, the other upon the autumnal rains, the edible grains consisting of the rice and several kinds of millet. Of the cultivated area a small part (technically termed "wet") is watered from artificial tanks which often rise to the proportions of lakes; the remainder (technically termed "dry") is watered in some parts from wells, but for the most part from rainfall. The proportion of wet lands varies greatly in the several districts, being largest in Chingleput, where it exceeds one half of the whole cultivation, and smallest in Bellary, where it is only one-twentieth.

'The failure was worst in the "wet lands." The tanks, having their catchment areas in undulating plains or low hills on which but little rain descended, were left almost dry. What are usually splendid sheets of water became scorched dusty plains, appearing as huge black patches with cracked and fissured soil. The sluices, the distributing channels, and all the apparatus of irrigation lay useless. Such an universal drying-up of the tanks, for which the districts below the Ghât Mountains are so celebrated, has hardly been witnessed within the memory of living man.[1]

[1] The Kistna district has been reckoned among the distressed districts; but I have not so regarded it, as only a small portion of it suffered.—*Sir R. Temple.*

'The "dry" lands fared somewhat better. Whatever rain fell did cause something, however scanty, to spring up in them. But even then, fertile expanses of champaign which ought to be clothed with crops, look bare and arid, being little better than a desert. The wells retained some of their supply; though even in them the water fell lower and lower, and sometimes disappeared altogether. Of the more valuable crops, the sugar-cane, the tobacco, the garden produce, were in part preserved. But the cotton crop of Bellary and Adoni yielded nothing. The factories are closed and the machinery is silent. Though the cultivators fell short of doing all they might have done, yet in countless instances they made a brave fight to save their crops. They excavated their failing wells deeper and deeper in the rocky strata; they dug pits in their fields, searching for moisture; they sunk wells with wicker work. They delved for springs and under-currents of water in the sandy beds of the dry rivers, and there indeed their toil was often rewarded, miles and miles of well-filled watercourses being led off to resuscitate the withering crops. These practices, which on this occasion stood the people in such good stead, are known to them in ordinary times, but were resorted to very largely during this year. The Government wisely exhorted the cultivators to deepen the old wells and to excavate new wells; and offered them advances of money for these purposes, relaxing somewhat the rules and conditions under which such advances are ordinarily made. In many hundreds of instances they availed themselves of these advantages.

'The failure was not uniform in degree throughout any of the distressed districts. It would be tedious here to give the particulars for the several subdivisions of each district. Suffice it to state, that out of a full

crop there were in the agricultural year 1876-77 only the fractions shown in the following statement; in a parallel column of which there is given the population of each district, so as to convey some idea of the gravity of the misfortune resulting from the loss of crop.

	Crop in 1876–7.	Population.
Bellary	One-sixteenth of an average good crop	1,688,000
Kurnool . . .	One-sixteenth „ „	960,000
Cuddapah . . .	Three-sixteenths „ „	1,351,000
Nellore	One quarter „ „	1,377,000
Chingleput (inclusive of Madras City),	Three-sixteenths „ „	1,336,000
North Arcot . .	One quarter „ „	2,015,000
Salem	One-third „ „	1,967,000
Coimbatore . .	One quarter „ „	1,763,000
Madura	One quarter „ „	2,267,000
Tinnevelly . . .	Six-sixteenths „ „	1,640,000

'Experience has shown that the difficulty of dealing with famine is aggravated if the population is dense, and lessened if it is spare. The following statement shows the average incidence of the population on the square mile in each district. As compared with some parts of India the most distressed districts are thinly peopled: and those tracts which are more thickly peopled are, fortunately, less distressed:—

Bellary has a population of . . .	151	persons to the square mile.
Kurnool	130	
Cuddapah	161	
Nellore	162	
Chingleput (exclusive of Madras City) .	340	
North Arcot	282	
Salem	262	
Coimbatore	237	
Madura	238	
Tinnevelly	327	

'The consequences of such a failure in 1876 are affected for better or for worse by the results of pre-

vious years. The year 1874 was generally good, and left a reserve of surplus grain. But 1875 was in many places unpropitious; and failure of crops in Mysore drained off supplies towards that province. In Bellary and in some parts of Kurnool, 1875 had been unfortunate in its seasons; and in Bellary 1874 had also been unfavourable. These circumstances caused the drought of 1876 to be felt with more intensity in Bellary than anywhere.'

CHAPTER III.

THE MONTHS OF FEBRUARY AND MARCH.

ADVANTAGE was taken by Sir Richard Temple of his visit to Madras, to impress upon the local Government the advisability of adopting the reduced rate of relief, which he had recommended, almost immediately after entering the Presidency, and which was being carried out in Bombay. The proposal was urged by him on financial grounds, but was strongly objected to by the Madras Government, for other, and, what were considered higher, reasons. However, Sir Richard's strong will prevailed, and on February 3 the Secretary of State was informed that the Madras Government had resolved to adopt experimentally, in deference to the suggestions of the Delegate, the same scale of payment of wages for relief labourers as is proposed to be enforced in the Bombay Presidency. Sir Richard's minutes and memoranda, Lord Salisbury was further informed, were still under consideration, and action upon them was further deferred. At the same time the condition of affairs in North Arcot—the district alleged a few days before by the Delegate to be in no need of relief works—was described as very bad, and camps were ordered to be formed at Chittoor, Vellore, and Ranipett, a special officer being detailed to assist the collector. It was feared that distress in this part of the country was likely to be very severe. Private charity in the town of Madras was checked, and grants

in aid of donations which had been given were stopped. Indiscriminate and badly controlled charity was working much mischief. The authorities thenceforward undertook to meet all wants.

Whilst these orders were being carried out, Sir Richard Temple had left Madras, and again proceeded on tour. Having seen in the Madras town relief camps a large number of persons from North Arcot district who had been reduced by want to a very deplorable condition, and having also heard from Colonel Hearn, C.I.E., the Inspector General of Police, who had recently been in the district, that many of the inhabitants in the great Zemindaries, in the northern part, must soon die of hunger, although the collector and native officials did not consider the situation quite so critical, Sir Richard deemed it advisable to revisit that district. On this occasion he found that in the taluk of Chendragherri, which appeared to be the worst off, no relief works had been opened, and he was of opinion that some should be established at once. There seemed to be misunderstanding here, as in Cuddapah, between the Civil and the Departmental Public Works officers, as to estimates and rates, &c. This was going on whilst in some of these parts 'the people were drifting into severe distress.' Sir Richard was informed the Rev. Mr. Wyckoff, an American missionary, that he had been obliged to help certain Christians who were wholly without food or means of earning it; and that there were many villages in the lower tracts named which could not hold out much longer. At Vellore Sir Richard found 7,000 people in receipt of a daily dole of raw rice, and urged the completion of a camp there, instead of this form of relief. Two more camps on the Arconum road were also recommended, to intercept immigrants bound for Madras. Sir

Richard concludes his minute thus: 'Although the collector has justly held back as long as he could with safety, yet in the eastern part of the district further holding back would no longer be compatible with safety.'

From North Arcot to Cuddapah the Delegate next proceeded, and recorded his impressions at Bangalore a few days after of what could be done to restrict expenditure, as far as was 'compatible with the safety of the people.' His general impressions, after full consultation with local officers, were:—(1) That the 19 per cent. of the population then on relief works was too high, and the work got out of the people too little. (2) That more should be done towards working them on tanks and irrigation projects than roads. (3) That village inspection should be enforced, and that when the numbers on charitable relief largely increased, camps should be formed, and indoor aid given; that wages should be paid in cash and not in grain.

Of the Nellore district, in spite of the harvest being very small there, Sir Richard speaks highly, particularly with respect to the collector's discrimination in regard to admissions on relief. At the end of the month, when he saw the East Coast Canal, he approved of it as a relief work. About 30,000 labourers were then employed upon it; but Sir Richard recommended that 15,000 from Kurnool, 15,000 from Bellary, and 10,000 from Cuddapah should be drafted on in addition.

Writing from Arconum on March 3, the Delegate further suggested the advantages of the early commencement of the Sungum project in the same district (Nellore), whereby the flood waters of the Pennar river could be utilised in filling various tanks and channels at an anticipated outlay of 27,00,000 rs.,

with a return of 2,50,000 rs. annually from 94,000 acres irrigated.

The remaining minutes and memoranda of general interest—there were some on special subjects, such as making the most of the railway carrying capacity—were concerned mainly with 'shroffing' the people in relief camps and suggesting large works.

On March 18 Sir Richard Temple wrote[1] at length, urging the Madras Government to apply more generally the test of employment on larger public works, under engineering supervision, away from their homes, instead of offering to all easy work, or imperfectly supervised work, near their homes. On March 29 Sir R. Temple wrote[2] again, representing the great desirability of having the relief works controlled and supervised by engineering officers, and, at any rate, of utilising for this object the existing Public Works Department staff as far as it would go. And he gave lists of works on which, according to the showing of the local Public Works Department officers, 51,000 labourers in Bellary, and 52,000 in Kurnool, could be at once employed on professionally supervised works. On April 6 Sir R. Temple wrote[3] that the Government of India, by sanctioning the Bellary-Hooblee Railway, had 'established the principle that, in the dearth of large projects for employment of relief labour, the earthwork of any such railway projects might be commenced, even though Government might not be able at present to complete the scheme.' He went on to say—'Further, I have seen in the Madras Presidency that there is great need for large works, on which a large number of relief labourers can be concentrated under

[1] Minute No. LXXV.
[2] Minute No. LXXXVII.
[3] Minute No. XCII.

adequate professional supervision. My minutes, dated March 18 and 29, set forth the great advantages to be obtained by placing relief works under professional supervision. In Chingleput and North Arcot districts there was special need for professionally supervised works. So long, therefore, as the Government of India was not committed to the completion of the proposed line, I considered that it might be better to employ relief labourers under engineering control, on a work that might hereafter be useful, than to leave them all on the scattered civil works, whereon little real labour was exacted, and over which there was practically no adequate supervision.'

On these grounds he recommended that the earthwork on the Conjeveram and Chingleput branch line of the South India Railway should be sanctioned, and the Government of India forthwith sanctioned the work. On April 14, Sir R. Temple, on his second visit to Salem, found that in that district 25,000 relief labourers, out of a total of 47,000, were employed on properly supervised large and small works under the Public Works Department. He drew[1] the attention of the Madras Government to this circumstance, and suggested that the policy, which worked well in Salem, might equally be carried out in other districts, where the numbers of relief labourers were much larger, and where professionally supervised works were most urgently required. Again, regarding the South Arcot district, where distress was then only beginning, Sir R. Temple wrote[2]:—'If relief works have to be opened at all, I would earnestly recommend that this be not done through the civil officers, who have so much else to attend to, but should be entrusted to the regular

[1] Minute No. XCVIII. dated April 10.
[2] Minute No. CV. dated April 20, 1877.

Public Works Department which, in this district, is strongly represented by the irrigation engineers. There is much work for them to do by way of repairing and improving the tanks; and, if they undertake this, they will be able to afford all the relief that is needed for the able-bodied, who will be thus employed on works not scattered but concentrated, and under professional supervision. To the civil officers would then be left what may be described as their legitimate work, that is, visiting the villages in search of destitute and helpless persons, affording gratuitous relief to some, and assigning light work to others who, though weakly, can yet do something.' On the same date he repeated[1] his recommendations regarding the North Arcot district, and urged that, as numbers of good irrigation works were ready and waiting to be done, and as the engineers were anxious to do them, the relief labourers should be drafted off the petty works under civil officers, and employed under engineering supervision on useful, properly organised works. In his final minute on the Cuddapah district, Sir R. Temple repeated[2] his recommendation 'that the Public Works establishment should be utilised by being ordered to take charge of as many of the relief works as possible.' On April 24 he drew[3] the attention of the Madras Government to the fact that though the Bellary-Hooblee Railway had been sanctioned two months previously, yet only 3,000 labourers were employed on that useful and well supervised work, whereas there were some 240,000 relief labourers on petty, comparatively useless, and unsupervised works in the Bellary district; and he urged that more labourers should be drafted to that work.

[1] Minute No. CVI. dated March 20.
[2] Minute No. CVII. dated April 22.
[3] Minute No. CXI. dated April 24.

In his final minute on the Kurnool district, Sir R. Temple drew attention to the difference between the Bombay system and the Kurnool system. He wrote:—'In the Bombay Deccan the Department of Public Works has full control over the relief labourers, while in Kurnool it has not.' The measure primarily to be suggested was 'the concentration of the gangs of labourers on public works (specified in the minutes of March 17 and 29) under Public Works officers.' Finally, on the day he left the Madras Presidency to take up the Government of Bombay, Sir R. Temple again urged[1] on the Madras Government the need of concentrating their relief labourers on works supervised by the Public Works Department, and he contrasted the Bombay relief works system with the Madras system in these words:—

'In the Bombay Presidency the plan of fully utilising the Engineering Department has been so advanced that now almost all the relief labourers are under the Public Works Department. Out of 287,760 persons in all, 259,057 are under that department, and only 28,703 are under civil officers. In the Madras Presidency, out of 716,507 in all, there are not more than 83,000[2] under the Public Works Department, the remainder, 633,507, being under civil officers. Out of this latter number it may be admitted that 24,140 in Coimbatore, 28,000 in Salem, 13,626 in Madura, in all 65,766, are well and fully tasked.

[1] Minute No. CXIV.

[2]

East Coast Canal	40,000
Arconum Doubling	15,000
Bellary-Dharwar Railway	3,000
Salem District	25,000
Total	83,000

'Some may be very shortly expected on the Chingleput Railway, and some also on the irrigation works of North Arcot. The remainder, 56[illegible],741, are, with the exception of a certain number at Cuddapah (which I cannot state precisely) under the civil officers, and are for the most part lightly tasked. It is especially remarkable that in the two districts showing the largest numbers—Bellary and Kurnool—having both together 422,784 persons, the whole are under civil officers, and lightly tasked, with the exception of the 3,000 on the railway from Bellary towards Dharwar. There is no want of engineering and professional establishments in the districts of Bellary, Kurnool, and Cuddapah; on the contrary, each district is under a district engineer, whose executive charge is divided into so many "ranges," in each of which there is an engineer officer. But, as shown by me in former minutes, these excellent and competent establishments only help in a general way, and have no actual charge of any relief work. They may be utilised fully for this important purpose at any moment the Madras Government may see fit. The same remarks apply equally to North Arcot, and would similarly apply to South Arcot if any relief works shall have to be opened there. They apply too in a considerable degree to Nellore.'

Sir Richard also strongly insisted again and again upon the advisability of utilising village agency to the utmost and making house-to-house visitation. From a despatch dated Tripetty, February 26, 1877, an extract may be given which is representative of much writing on this subject. Sir Richard says:—'I have visited the Ceded districts, Cuddapah, North Arcot, and part of Kurnool, with the view of ascertaining how far systematic house-to-house visitation is being carried out, and how far the village headmen discharge the

duty of searching out and bringing up every case of dangerous distress. The orders of the Madras Government on this subject have, I believe, reached the village headmen, and Government officers, European and natives, are doing something in this direction. Still the fact remains that, up to the present time, the village headmen have brought forward only a very few cases of persons (in the many taluks I visited there were hardly a score of such cases altogether) who were in extreme need of relief. At the same time, in many of the relief labour gangs I found, side by side with hundreds or thousands of people not as yet in absolute need, a few persons in very poor physical condition, an inquiry into whose cases showed that they were the only bread-winners for whole families of infirm people. There is risk that the weaker members of families in such straits must sooner or later die, unless they are brought upon charitable relief. And there is always the fear that, if cases of this kind come to light, more (possibly worse) cases of the same kind remain undiscovered. And all this may occur side by side and simultaneously with the employment of great gangs of relief labourers, whose numbers perhaps exceed the real dimensions of distress. During my visit I have always drawn the attention of the relief officers in charge to the dangerous nature of such cases. And I have explained that the admission of thousands of comparatively well-to-do people to relief gangs without discrimination cannot relieve the few scores of really needy people who may be at home in their villages. I would recommend that the existing orders of the Madras Government (which are doubtless excellent so far as they go) be further explained or enforced, and that a written (or printed) notice of his duties and responsibilities be sent to every village headman in the more distressed

districts; that a written acknowledgment be obtained from him, and that a report be demanded of him of his having inspected every household in his village, and of his either having done the needful, if he found any person in dangerous straits, or of his having found none such. The intentions of Government will then become really known, and supervising officers of all ranks will be able to enforce the real and careful discharge of their duties by the village officers. It is assumed that they have already been authorised to relieve temporarily any person in this condition at the Government expense. They therefore cannot have any motive for concealing the existence of any such case, if it exist. The reports of the village headmen will therefore be evidence of the best kind.'

Such, in brief, was the course of the Famine Delegate in the distressed districts during the months of February and March. He travelled far and wide, consulted many officials and inspected large gangs of coolies, striking off all who looked in a fairly good condition, all who were well clothed, and all who possessed ornaments of even a trifling value. All this was done with a zeal and thoroughness characteristic of the man, and of the chief member of his staff, Mr. C. E. Bernard. The impression left upon the mind by the perusal of the 200 minutes and memoranda penned by Sir Richard and his staff is that the disaster was met successfully and well. This is particularly apparent in the General Report[1] reviewing the whole course of the Delegate's journeyings. But this report, and the many minutes, are essentially misleading, as containing the results only of hasty investigation and a necessarily imperfect acquaintance with facts. One idea derived from Sir Richard Temple's report is that only

[1] Blue Book, No. III. pp. 352 to 380.

a very few cases of deaths from starvation took place, and that the village system of official rule could be made available to prevent cases of very deep distress. A more insecure foundation to rest upon in such an emergency than the village officials of the Presidency cannot be conceived. They are essentially and entirely untrustworthy unless carefully and closely supervised. Again, the idea is given that very little abnormal suffering, and only a slight increase of deaths, occurred. Faithful pictures of the period would need to contain such scenes as are described by Dr. Cornish in one of his minutes written in reply to Sir Richard Temple. Dr. Cornish, writing in March, said :—'But if the condition of the labouring classes is so generally satisfactory to Sir Richard Temple, how is it, I may ask, that the death returns of the famine districts are so much above what is usual? I have not as yet received the returns for February, but those for December and January are available for comparison with the average results of the previous five years. I must, however, note with respect to these district death returns, that from personal investigation in the districts, I know they very much understate the real mortality of the last few months. The truth is, the famine has disorganised our village establishments to such an extent that the actual numbers who have already perished will never be known. Hundreds and thousands of people have died away from their homes, have fallen down by the roadsides, and their bodies have been left to be eaten by dogs and jackals. Mr. Gribble, the sub-collector of Cuddapah, in the course of a morning's ride of fourteen miles, came upon eight unburied bodies; and at Royachoti in January last Mr. Supervisor Mathews informed me that after an outbreak of cholera 53 dead

bodies lay for days exposed in the dry bed of a river near the works the relief coolies were engaged on. Walking over this ground two months after the event, the numerous skulls and human bones scattered on the surface convinced me that the statement was founded on fact.'

During the period covered by the minutes summarised in the foregoing pages, the Madras Government had been exerting themselves to the utmost to relieve distress, whilst the public of India had become greatly excited over the proposal of Sir Richard Temple to give the people what was known as the 'reduced ration.' The Government of Madras adopted the scale with manifest reluctance, and watched its operation with concern. Their anxiety was very great, and week after week was mentioned to the Secretary of State, the point being insisted upon with marvellous persistency. On March 3 it was pointed out that a higher scale of pay or allowance had been authorised for Mysore, which was under the direct administrative charge of the Government of India, than was permitted in the Presidency of Madras. Reports from the various districts were received telling of alarming results, and Sir Richard Temple was telegraphed to visit Madras. A conference was held, and the question debated, Sir Richard holding tenaciously to his view, and arguing that enough time had not been given to try the proposal properly. So strongly did he press his argument, and so successfully did he indicate the need for financial economy, that the experiment was continued for nearly two months longer, and only set aside in the month of May.

To return to current history, and note the number of people on the hands of Government. On January 14

1,165,000 people were on relief works and gratuitous relief in these proportions:—

On Works	1,055,000
Gratuitously relieved.	110,000
Total . .	1,165,000

On February 6 there were 908,410; on February 13, 891,030, showing a total decrease in the week of 17,380, in the month of 283,970—mainly the result of Sir Richard Temple's action in 'shroffing'[1] the works, &c. On March 10 the numbers were 667,477; and on March 24, 655,066, which was the lowest point reached.

Administration meanwhile was being carried on in Madras under painful circumstances. Sir Richard Temple was not content merely with observation and suggestions, but proceeded to dictation. Matters, however, did not reach a climax till the following month, in the narrative of which period the circumstances may be more fitly described.

It has been said that great interest was taken by the general public in the progress of the campaign, and no part of the fight was so carefully watched as that relating to the reduced ration. This ration was universally condemned, and loud protests were made against such an experiment being made on a million human lives. One objector said, 'It would be better to shoot down the poor wretches at once than to prolong their misery in the way proposed.' It was pointed out that the usual daily wages in the agricultural districts was two measures, or about five lbs. of grain. Sir Richard Temple's proposal was one lb. of grain plus half an anna

[1] 'In this part of the country the process of rejecting from the gangs those who are well-to-do, and retaining those who are poor, is described by an expressive phrase, "shroffing," in allusion to the manner by which a "shroff" or money-changer tests the intrinsic value of the coins presented to him.'—*Minute by Sir R. Temple.*

to purchase condiments. A comparison with jail diets was instituted by various parties.[1]

The question was argued, too, on the higher ground that it would be for the advantage of the State to keep the people well alive. 'A fair day's work for a fair day's pay' was the ground taken up in the chief organs of public opinion. Mr. Wedderburn, collector of Coimbatore, expressed himself with much clearness on the point. In a communication to Government he said :—'I trust that no evil will be imputed to me in consequence of my statement that I only employed able-bodied persons. I have not waited till the relieved persons were wasted with starvation and unable to work before opening works for the relief of those who have no other employment open to them at present. I therefore call those on the relief works able-bodied, that is, fit for work, as I know them to be. If, on the other hand, I am directed to wait until starvation has worked its effect before opening out a useful road or other work, I shall, of course, obey instructions; but the work from

[1] A Ceylon newspaper made the following comparison:—

Daily allowance to an able-bodied labourer on an Indian Relief Work:	Daily allowance to Juan Appu, recently convicted of knocking out the brains of a near relative:
	Bread . . . 4 ounces.
	Rice . . . 20 ,,
	Meat or fish . . 5 ,,
	Vegetables . . 4 ,,
	Plantains . . 2 ,,
16 ounces of rice	Dholl . . . 2 ,,
and	Sugar . . . 1 ,,
one anna in cash.	Coffee . . . 1 ,,
	Ghee . . . ½ ,,
	Onions . . . ½ ,,
	Salt and pepper . ½ ,,
	Curry stuff a sufficient quantity, comprising cummin seed, coriander seed, garlic, Maldive fish, tamarind, saffron, cocoanut and lime.

starved persons will not be cheap, and the relief expenses in the end will certainly be greater. As it is, I exact a full tale of work, equal to, and in most cases above, what the professional department do, and the fact that it is exacted shows that the persons who do that work are necessitous, though not as yet reduced in strength by starvation; if they were they could not execute the task-work, but would have to be semi-gratuitously relieved, instead of by their employment keeping both themselves and their infirm relatives off the list of pure or semi-gratuitous relief. I have not shrunk from the exposition of my famine policy; it is by affording work of a useful kind to prevent starvation of those out of employ by reason of the season, and by their employment on full task-work to maintain the infirm of their families—the old grandmother incapable of work, and the young children as yet unable to do anything for their subsistence. As a rule, there are few utterly incapable persons who are altogether destitute of friends or relatives; such persons, unless supported by friends or relatives, would perish in a good season; therefore they exist. But in bad seasons, when these natural supporters have no work or food, how can they support their infirm relatives? And I may ask whether it is better that working people should support their infirm relatives, or that these relatives should come to a gratuitous distribution of food—degrading in that it is gratuitous. And whether it is not more economical for Government to have good work done for its money, than to open out feeding-houses where nothing is returned for the food distributed and a wide-spread system of degradation of the people introduced. Once open a Government relief-house and the able-bodied will say to his infirm relatives, why not go and get relief

for nothing instead of burdening me with your support? This is the world-wide result of such gratuitous relief.'

The reports which were received day by day of isolated cases of starvation intensified the public feeling, and strong opposition to the low ration was manifested. One great defect in the proposal was that they who received this ration were expected to support from it those members of the family who were too old, or too young, or too sickly for work. This was manifestly unfair, and when brought to Sir Richard Temple's notice, he—in a not very dignified manner—said he thought children were receiving a separate allowance. The Madras Government, all along dominated by a feeling of deep humanity, eased the severity of the ration by issuing on February 22 (No. 680, F.R.) an order which was tantamount to a censure on Sir Richard Temple's proposals, as it traversed all the points he had pressed upon the attention of collectors and their subordinates. This order deserves quotation in full. It is as follows :—

'1. His Grace the Governor in Council thinks it necessary to notice the following instructions issued by district officers, which are either too vague in their directions, or at variance with the orders of Government.

'2. In one report it is observed that a collector has delegated the sanction of estimates of relief works not exceeding 1,000 rs. to his subordinate officers. In this order the collector has divested himself of a responsibility which was placed in his hands, and which, in the opinion of Government, should remain with him.

'3. Another report contains a rule under which "a task-work for a gang on relief-works, as fixed by a certain scale, is never to be lowered, and no excuse for non-completion is to be taken;" and it is added, "that

if any gang fails to complete half the task-work, every individual of such a gang shall lose a whole day's pay."

'4. While fully sensible of the importance of requiring moderate work from all able-bodied persons on relief work, the Governor in Council has had before him examples in which a hard and fast rule, such as that above quoted, has led to disastrous results, and this is likely to be more especially the case when the supervision is left to native subordinates, who fear to modify, according to circumstances, the orders they have received. He desires, therefore, to impress on all collectors the necessity of carefully revising such instructions and guarding against their probable results. It must be remembered that many of those on relief works are unaccustomed to the work on which they are employed, or to working in gangs. It may, therefore, be an unjustifiable severity to keep a whole gang without food in consequence of individual weakness, illness, or contumacy.

'5. In the instructions issued by some collectors it is laid down that persons in the possession of good clothes must be rejected from relief gangs.

'6. His Grace in Council has reason to believe that this rule has also been too strictly interpreted, and that persons actually in extreme destitution have, on the ground that they are not in rags, or in the ordinary scantily clothed condition of the labouring agricultural cooly, been rejected, while it was the fact that these persons have abstained from public relief until on the verge of starvation, and that their clothing, although of good texture, would not find any sale among their starving neighbours.

'7. It is also observed that in some cases instructions have been issued "that on no account can Govern-

ment undertake to give subsistence to the children and infirm dependents of persons on relief works."

'8. The rigid enforcement of this instruction when labourers on relief works are obtaining a bare subsistence, has already in one instance led to deplorable results.

'9. The orders of Government on this subject are sufficient, if observed, to prevent any such occurrences, but his Grace in Council deems it of importance to bring the effect of this rule to the notice of all collectors, and earnestly to call their attention to the fact that the task that the Government and their officers have before them is to preserve, in so far as is humanly possible, the lives of the vast numbers whom the calamitous season has rendered entirely dependent on the State relief.

'10. In making these remarks, his Grace in Council takes this opportunity of cordially acknowledging the valuable services rendered by every class of the Government service, and the cheerful spirit in which they are giving effect to the orders of the Government.'

On another matter of first importance, also, great difference of opinion was held and expressed. Sir Richard Temple desired that the land revenue should not be remitted but only suspended, to be recovered in a better season. The Madras authorities stoutly resisted this, first of all questioning the Delegate's right to interfere in a matter of this kind, and, secondly, pointing out, in one or two well-reasoned communications, that remission, under the peculiar tenure by which land is held in Madras, was alone possible. The discussion was embittered by Sir Richard Temple quoting some of the collectors against their own Government as being in favour of the plan of suspension only. The statements cited in support were categorically denied, and a conflict of testimony was the consequence. However, the Governor and his Council remained firm, and advanced

such cogent reasons in favour of remission that, in a despatch to the Secretary of State, dated February 16, the Viceroy wrote to the effect that the Madras Government had shown good reasons[1] for the opinion they held that in ryotwari districts it would, as a general rule, be inexpedient to substitute suspensions for remissions of revenue, especially in the case of a season so disastrous as the present. This set a very vexed question finally at rest.

Another decision which was of real good, was the sanctioning by the Government of India of the Bellary-Gudduk Railway, on which a large number of people could find employment and be adequately supervised.

The various proposals in the minutes of the Delegate, and the memoranda of his secretary, were severely criticised by the newspapers. Sir Richard Temple's attempt to draw a line between distress and starvation was

[1] Among the 'good reasons' urged by the Madras Government were these:—

(*a*) 'The Madras ryot is very heavily taxed; five rupees per acre for wet (single crop), and one rupee per acre for dry, being his average assessment. Moreover, under other terminable settlements, the whole of the waste land is given up by Government for the term of thirty years; and under the Zemindari Settlement it is given up in perpetuity in addition to the percentage for the zemindar's commission. But in Madras, not only is every acre of waste liable to its full quota of the tax, as soon as brought under cultivation, but there is no allowance whatever for fallow, or for land in a ryot's occupation which is *bonâ fide* set apart by him for the pasturage of his cattle.

(*b*) 'Let the extent and nature of their holdings be considered. The number of leases is 2,392,064: of these, 38,825 only are above 100 rupees, while upwards of one million and a quarter are below 10 rupees. The average extent of a holding is eight acres, and the average assessment payable is 15 rupees, or thirty shillings sterling. How are two million peasant proprietors of this kind to pay sixty shillings apiece next year—after a season of unprecedented calamity which, in addition to other sufferings and losses, has brought about already the destruction of a great portion of their cattle, and will cause the loss of many more? So far from supposing it possible to collect the assessment from the great body of impoverished ryots, the Government anticipate having to make considerable advances for the assistance of cultivators in the purchase of agricultural stock and seed grains.'

condemned, whilst his expectation that the supervising staff on all the works and in all the villages was sufficient for every purpose was scouted as a dependence upon an impossibility.[1] It was urged, too, that instead of driving

[1] Mr. Wedderburn, the collector of Coimbatore, probably the most successful district administrator during the famine, says:—'If orders could make returns perfect and tahsildars efficient, the returns would be unassailable; as it is, I am at the mercy of tahsildars, who cannot understand the intense anxiety about the numbers entertained on relief works.' The special correspondent of the *Friend of India* writes on this point:—'Referring to the European and native officials who have been set free for famine work, and to the staff of additional men that have been placed "on special duty," his Honour observes:—"If they are alert, as they doubtless are, it is almost impossible for any man, woman, or child to drift into danger of starvation without the case being found out and remedied." A very little experience of the world convinces most people that we must wait till the millennium for men of the class indicated in these words. Sir Richard has explained at length that the subordinate native officers are to scour the by-ways and hedges, and rescue every soul that is crossing the boundary between distress and starvation. But the simple fact is that all India could not provide natives enough who possessed the combination of qualities that this particular kind of efficiency implies. Probably not half the members of the covenanted Civil Service would be found equal to the work.' Again, the same writer says:—'There are strict orders not to let anyone suffering from small-pox into the enclosure; but I counted thirty cases of the disease among about five hundred persons. These were promptly turned out when it was seen that I was taking note of them; yet when Sir Richard Temple came to the place after I had left, he detected about thirty cases more. His Honour spoke very strongly about it; but I wonder that what he saw did not shake his faith in the "effective agency" which he expects to do such wonders in the way of rescuing from starvation persons who may have been injudiciously turned off the relief works. Sir Richard saw here with his own eyes that a sheristadar, two constables, and six head coolies, simply because there was no European to hold the lash over them, would look on in listless inertion while children in a horrible state of small-pox were carried into the crowd; and yet his Honour expects every patel who sees or hears of a person starving to leave his dinner, take the person on his back, and hurry off to the Hospital! At least that is the only check Sir Richard Temple relies upon to make it "almost impossible for any man, woman, or child to suffer to a dangerous degree from starvation." I was told that a vaccinator sometimes came to the place and vaccinated as many children as had never been vaccinated before; also that the parents objected so much that many of them kept away their children from relief rather than allow them to be vaccinated; but I could not learn from anyone whatever, whether there were any orders on the subject. The children that I saw with the disease were unceremoniously driven out of the enclosure but no one thought of taking any precaution that they or the mother who went out in charge of the very young ones should not lose their meal on that account. An affecting

the people from works, the works should be made so severe that only those in real need would go to them. In this connection it was said by one in a good position to judge: 'An enormous sum of money has been spent on the mission of the Special Delegate, but he is going back to Calcutta without having taken a step to get the people's side of the case. I have read about a dozen columns of his Honour's despatches, and have found only one fact that the Government of India could not have got from the collectors' reports, and that is, that the people on the relief works are fatter than they might be.' What is desiderated here was effected subsequently, when the ration was reduced to 1lb. of food, plus one anna money payment.

Whilst the numbers on relief camps were rigorously reduced, disease was largely prevailing, and work was not to be had. The weekly reports were invariably of this nature:

Kistna.—Cholera generally prevalent; deaths, 174.
Kurnool.—Cholera in all taluks but one; deaths, 114.
Cuddapah.—Deaths from cholera, 630.
Bellary.—Cholera in all 15 taluks.
Nellore.—Cholera deaths, 448.
Chingleput.—Cholera prevails.
North Arcot.—Cholera still prevalent.
South Arcot.—Cholera deaths, 55.
Salem.—Cholera in all taluks.

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case came under my notice at the kitchen. A girl, eight or nine years of age, came too late to get in, leading a little brother by the hand, and carrying an infant sister. The baby was so literally skin and bone that its skin hung from its legs and arms like empty sacks. It was scarcely alive, but I have never seen the life left in a creature so reduced as it was. The girl's story, as interpreted to me by the sheristadar, was, that her father was a labourer on the relief works; that she had come in time to get her porridge yesterday, but that this morning she had been delayed at home while her mother went out to gather sticks. The sheristadar ordered her to get a ball of jowaree. About four persons made a grievance that the quantity of porridge given them was insufficient, but many complained that the jowaree was not cleaned before it was boiled, and that the porridge was consequently full of little stones and grit.'

Coimbatore.—Virulent cholera; deaths, 733.
Tanjore.—201 deaths from cholera.
Madura.—Cholera in 5 taluks; deaths, 315.
Trichinopoly.—Cholera more serious; deaths, 147.
Tinnevelly.—Cholera increasing; bad in three northern taluks.
Malabar.—86 deaths from cholera in five taluks.

It was urged by those opposed to the reduced ration that, however much might be said in favour of it *per se*, to carry it out whilst so much suffering and such diseases were prevailing was impolitic. To such complaints there was the reply, 'Twenty-five per cent. of expenditure will be saved.'

During this time deaths occurred from starvation, many on the roadside. In the neighbourhood of Madras Sir Richard Temple's carriage was stopped that some of those in it might get down to see a dead body on the side of the road. The incident was reported in one of the local papers.[1] The scenes that were witnessed in and about the relief camps of the city and neighbourhood were heartrending, whilst the death rate was appalling. These details, however, will be fittingly described in the section devoted to relief camps. Sad scenes of sufferings were witnessed in some of the districts, and the testimony of an eye-witness may be given. It may also be remarked that the statements now to be quoted, though printed in some of the Madras journals, were never questioned by

[1] 'On returning from Yeddacuncherry, and near the village of Perambore, Sir Richard and the officers with him were much shocked at observing a man lying by the roadside, dying from dysentery and dropsy, and literally a skeleton in appearance. The man was within a quarter of a mile of a police station, and hardly more from a Local Fund Dispensary, yet no relief had been given him, and he was evidently a victim of starvation. The dresser at the dispensary was at once sent for, and orders were given for the removal of the man to camp hospital at Yeddacuncherry. The party then passed on, only a few yards further to come upon the body of a child, which had evidently died from the effects of starvation, and Sir Richard was informed that an adult male had died from starvation a day or two ago near the same spot.'—*Madras Mail*, March 13.

the authorities. Private inquiry amongst those able to judge, *i.e.* those who were frequently by duty or inclination brought in contact with the scenes described, bears them out as veracious records. The special correspondent of the *Friend of India*, writing from Kalastri, North Arcot, on March 16, says :—'I went all through the town to-day, first by the temple, the chuttrum or rest-house, the palace, and the Brahman quarters, and afterwards through the bazaar, and the poor parts which, together with the jail and the police-station, are separated by some gardens from the better portion. I saw altogether about thirty cases of extreme emaciation, as bad as the worst cases in the Madras relief camps. About half of these were suffering from diarrhœa or from the fatal dropsy that often follows the diarrhœa; and several were too weak to speak, and had too evidently lain down, never to rise again. One poor boy, about eight years old, was lying by himself in a chuttrum, and was in a most filthy state from diarrhœa. He was just able to mutter that his mother had gone out a few minutes before, but he could not tell where they had come from, and although he rose to his feet when he was shaken up, he sank again almost immediately. I have within the last fortnight become familiar with sights of this kind, and I feel an irresistible longing to send you photographs of some of the living skeletons, of which there are evidently hundreds in the districts immediately surrounding Madras. Words convey a poor idea of the appearance of a human being for some days before he dies of starvation. If the *London Illustrated* or the *Graphic* had an artist here for a week, he could create a sensation all over England that would surpass the stir that was made about the Bulgarian atrocities. It would be a most undesirable and unfair thing to do, for there could be no corresponding representation of the hercu-

lean but hopeless efforts that are being made to remedy the state of matters perfectly. Still it is not a little curious how completely the most awful facts of the present famine have been left out of all the voluminous official papers that have been published on the subject. We have had letters by the column from the Madras Government to the Government of India, and from the Government of India to the Secretary of State; reports from collectors, proceedings of the Board of Revenue, minutes by the Famine Delegate, and letters in the *Pioneer*; yet I would defy anyone to guess, from the whole combined, that dozens of persons are dying every day of starvation pure and simple, within a hundred miles' radius of Madras. I say "dozens" advisedly, and in doing so leave a wide margin for perhaps a hundred deaths a day, not due to present starvation, but to diarrhœa, dropsy, and exhaustion brought on by starvation before the relief measures were extensively organised.

'Of course Sir Richard Temple would see it if he could, but his Honour does not stay long enough in one place. I was told that on his first visit to the Red Hills camp, he remained only an hour, and expressed himself fully satisfied with the beds and the cooking-pots. However, the morning after my telegram about the true state of things was published at Calcutta, he came down into the camp like a meteor, and that evening's *Madras Mail* contained five separate paragraphs on starvation. It is to be hoped that his Honour's undoubted experience will enable him to suggest some way of preventing people from wandering about till they fall down and die, only that I fear there is no possible way. The local Government has just published one more desperate defence of the "effective agency" which Sir Richard Temple proposed for this

very purpose in one of his earlier minutes. It says:—"His Grace in Council attaches the very greatest importance to this branch of the relief operations. It is evident that, unless the most vigorous efforts are made to give effect to these instructions, there may be, side by side with a well-organised and sufficient system of relief works, calamitous mortality among the old, the very young, and the sickly, who, by reason of their age or infirmities, cannot benefit by relief works. Nothing can really prevent this but the most constant care in impressing their responsibilities on the village headmen, so as to ensure systematic house-to-house visitation in every village in the distressed districts. The village talliaries or watchmen should also seek out on the highways the suffering poor who fall exhausted by the way, and who but for such aid must miserably perish. The assistance of the police which the Governor in Council entirely relies on must be enlisted to report cases of distress witnessed by beat constables."

'It is inconceivable how any European who has been five years in India can expect this special qualification from the natives. If every village headman had Sir Richard Temple's activity of temperament and vigour of body, the end might be attained; but half the collectors have not got that, and the few that have it are so distracted with office work, that they have to be content with merely issuing orders which they feel they ought personally to see carried out. These district officers, the collectors and their assistants, have often been good enough to take me with them on their rounds of inspection, and I have seen them working themselves into a passion at the perfectly indescribable apathy of tahsildars, moonsiffs, and other members of the "effective agency," who simply could not be made to see that sliding was not the proper condition of affairs. But having made

a "tremendous row," these officers have struck their tents and removed to the next stage, so that I could not help reflecting on the value of that thoroughness of purpose and rare energy that makes a man stay to see his orders carried out. The Bengal military officers, or, to be accurate, the two or three that I have met who have no office work to divide their attention, are indeed making themselves felt with effect; but they are all told off in charge of relief works, and they would besides, in all probability, be found unsuited for the task of interfering with village management. So it does not appear that there is any remedy possible for the melancholy neglect of human life that is going on on every hand. Not the heaviest fines, nor summary dismissal, could exact what is expected from the village moonsiffs and beat constables; and even if they had a man following them all day with a lash, they would sink from exhaustion in two or three weeks. I verily believe that Sir Richard Temple would do more practical good by personally entering upon this kind of work in a limited area, than by compassing about the entire famine tract, and fulminating proposals which not even one European in ten has the energy to put effectually into practice. His Honour could ride fifty miles a day without feeling it, and that area might be guaranteed free of starving cases for several days after the special avalanche.

'To return to the state of this town, and the case of the boy about whom I was writing. The first assistant collector, in my hearing, asked the deputy tahsildar why the poor child had not been given chlorodyne. "Yes, your Honour, we have got the chlorodyne, but we do not know how it should be given." "What! do you mean to say that you have not got printed instructions how to use it?" "Yes, your

Honour, we have got." Whereupon the first assistant pitched into the deputy tahsildar. We went on and came to another chuttrum where there were two dead bodies lying, one of a man and one of a child. Both were wasted to the bone, and the child's feet were swollen with dropsy. We could get no clear information as to who they were, and where they had come from, although the child's mother was sitting beside its corpse. The floor of the chuttrum had been fouled in five or six places by as many diarrhœa patients who had slept there during the night. Although it was ten o'clock in the morning, the place had not been cleaned.

'The general appearance of the town deserves a remark. It struck me as being under-populated. There were a great many well-to-do people—Brahmans, shopkeepers, and adherents to the palace. These looked sleek and comfortable, and many of their women and children were lavishly dressed. But there did not seem to be the usual number of the poorer class of residents, and I incline to the opinion that emigration to a considerable extent must have taken place. There is certainly little to keep such people here; there is no cultivation except in the bed of the stream, and most of the cattle have died. On the other hand, the streets were lined with paupers, mostly from the surrounding villages, and many from the jungles, who were waiting for the hour for the daily distribution of food. Some of these had rice congee in their chatties, which had probably been given to them that morning by charitably disposed individuals. A number were grubbing in the dust for grains of corn, or nibbling young mangoes not larger than nutmegs, or eating tamarinds and other unwholesome things they had picked up. I was especially shocked to see a woman,

whose little child was utterly emaciated and very ill from diarrhœa, trying to satisfy its cravings with small green mangoes. I have said that I happened to see about thirty cases of extreme emaciation. There were perhaps a couple of hundred persons besides, who, as could be seen at a glance, were unable to do any sort of work, although they had not yet lost their last ounce of flesh. Looked at in the light of the Sanitary Commissioner's observations on the imperceptible and fatal effects of slow starvation, these people unfortunately showed a sad account of numbered days. I noticed besides all this, one woman and about ten children with small-pox moving about among the people unconcerned. In connection with this it was interesting to see that vaccination, of all things, had been scrupulously attended to, and I noticed several emaciated children and diarrhœa patients with marks of recent vaccination on their arms. This, I have been told at the Madras relief camps, is very wrong, and there no one is allowed to be vaccinated who is not in a tolerably sound condition of body. A subordinate official and a servant of the Rajah saw all I have described, and were as indifferent as the trees growing about the town. They had known that the first assistant was coming, but it had not occurred to them to screen any of these things from his inspection. The people wandering about in the last stage of starvation, the children dying of diarrhœa on the road side, the small-pox cases spreading infection through the town, and the corpses in the chuttrum, were all accepted by them as natural and ordinary phases of real life, and they had nothing to say when the first assistant collector remonstrated with them about the state of things, except that the deputy tahsildar ventured upon the daring falsehood that all the weakest persons were searched out and

carried every day to the place of feeding. Yet these two local representatives of British and native authority are the highest specimens of the "effective agency" that Sir R. Temple expects to scour the country for cases of starvation. I need scarcely add that the first assistant made a "tremendous row." Especially, he gave the strictest orders that every case of emaciation that was beyond the Rajah's scale of relief should be hastened off, by any means and at any cost, to one of the relief camps. This, of course, must be done whether the people object or not, and it is the fact, that the rights which our starving fellow-subjects inherit under the glorious constitution of British liberties, are being outrageously violated in the vulgar anxiety to fill their bellies. In other words, if the people are found determined to starve, they are seized by the police and taken off in custody to the relief camp, all the authorities having come to a tacit understanding to break the letter of the law, in order to carry out its spirit.

'The jungle people whom I have mentioned a few sentences back are called Yenadees, and are in the habit of coming into towns to sell honey and other jungle produce. The following account of them is from a popular School Geography, under the head "Nellore": —"A wild race of people called Yenadees inhabit the jungles along the sea-shore. In habits, religion, and language, they are quite distinct from their neighbours. They are short in stature and of black complexion; capable of enduring great fatigue, and remarkably faithful and honest. They live on roots, fruits, leaves, fish, and rats, and have no industrial pursuits." These people have been driven from their haunts in great numbers by the famine, and a large proportion of the paupers in Kalastri belong to the class. In accordance with their idle and unsettled habits, they will not work

nor submit to restraint, and many of them must therefore die of want. I suppose it is nobody's business in Madras to know that there is such a tribe as the Yenadees; but it just occurs to me that if the strangers who are wandering aimlessly about and dying on the outskirts of the town should turn out to be Yenadees, that will mitigate in the same measure the nature of the calamity. For the lives of wild and unreasonable men of the jungle are not to be regarded as of equal value with those of industrious and satisfactory villagers, nor can they be equally protected.'

Further testimony from the same pen may be added. The extract to be immediately given throws some light on the reason why Government records contained no particulars of persons said to have died from starvation pure and simple. Village officers had been warned that no one was to be permitted to die of want, and consequently no death was reported under that heading. The correspondent writes :—

'Goodoor, March 20, 1877.

'This is a taluk twenty-three miles from Nellore. Although it is so near the collector's head-quarters, the state of things induced by the famine is as bad as at Kalastri, and the burial of the dead is shamefully neglected. One reason of this is that this taluk is not part of an assistant collector's division, but is under the deputy collector at Naidupett. I had a long talk with the tahsildar to-day, and told him all I saw yesterday in my walk through and around the town. He is an old man who has been thirty-five years in Government service, and is a very good specimen of the orthodox Brahman, who neither knows nor seeks to know a single thing beyond the routine of his kachcheri. He was almost entirely ignorant even of the geography

of the town, and could tell me nothing about the public health, the sanitation, or the relief measures, except by reference to his returns, which, he conscientiously said, it was not his duty, but that of the village moonsiff, to prepare. I do not mean to imply in the least that he was dull or stupid. On the contrary, he was more than ordinarily intelligent, and had a pleasant vein of humour; but he evidently had not evolved a new idea or not received a new impression for about a quarter of a century past. I have not a doubt that he may be looked upon as a faithful and satisfactory officer in ordinary times, but he is as useless in the present emergency as he would be in command of Scindia's army. I told him in full detail what I had seen in the burying-place, in the relief camp, and about the town, and he replied that he would issue orders to have things better managed. He said there was cholera here, carrying off two or three persons every day, but that the patients were getting only native medicines, as he had indented on Nellore for the proper sort, and had been told there were none in stock. I directed his attention to the last published Government order about house-to-house visitation, and the prompt removal of weak and starving persons to the relief camp. He asked what the date of the order was, and on my answering the 3rd instant, he remarked with confident gravity that it would be several weeks yet before that order could reach him by the ordinary channel. As he professed utter ignorance that anyone was suffering from starvation in the town, I asked him if the weekly mortuary returns did not open his eyes to the actual fact. He answered that they did not and could not, for in the event of an emaciated corpse being picked up within the town, the village moonsiff, whose duty alone it was to report cases, would not attribute the death to starvation, but would say cholera, or

dysentery, "or some usual disease." It is impossible to describe the innocent candour with which this assertion was made. The man had evidently never in his official experience associated returns with facts, and now the regular form returns had become so stereotyped in his mind, that the word "starvation" in the list of diseases would have struck him as an unpardonable incongruity contrary to all precedent. In short, he was ready to forward the village moonsiff a copy of whatever order the collector might send him, tabulate whatever figures the collector might call for, and to pay over whatever money the collector might sanction; but the rescue of dying children and the burial of corpses were matters beyond his cognizance.'

Later on in the same letter further incidents, showing the unsatisfactory nature of the instruments used as relief agents, are given. The following is most painful:—

'From the relief camp I went to the place where the unclaimed dead are buried, to the number of three or four a day, and the sights there were most revolting. It has been the custom, till a few days ago, to bury the corpses in the soft sand on the bank of the river, and the ground there is covered with ominous-looking mounds; but the collector was here lately, and ordered that the graves should be dug in future at a place some two hundred yards from the river. There are several rows of graves in this new place, and they have not been disturbed yet, but a sickening odour rises from them. On the river bank, however, where dogs have learned to go, the graves have been scraped open in every direction, and the place is strewed with human bones. I saw about twenty skulls, every one of which belonged to a grown-up man or woman. I would draw particular attention to this, for it is a well-known native

habit to be very careless about the burial of children, and it is more than probable that the children who die here are thrown into any ditch or under any hedge. The greater part of the bed of the river is dry, and I was shocked to see that it had been selected as a burying-place where fresh ashes showed that several bodies had been recently burnt. There are pools of water here and there in the bed, and these are in an abominably foul state, owing to bodies out of the graves having been dragged to the water to be eaten. There were ten or twelve pariah dogs prowling about as fat as sheep, and unusually bold, and there were also vultures sailing overhead or perched on the ground. I had been positively assured that bodies were as often thrown down and left as buried, and that dogs could any day be seen eating them, so I resolved to satisfy myself fully of that. Accordingly, after a couple of minutes' search, I came upon two dogs worrying over the body of a girl about eight years old. They had newly attacked it, and had only torn one of the legs a little, but the corpse was so enormously bloated that it was only from the total length of the figure one could tell it was a child's. The sight and smell of the locality were so revolting, and the dogs so dangerous, that I did not stay to look for a second body; but I saw two skulls and a backbone which had been freshly picked. It does not follow that these bodies had been thrown down on the open ground, for the graves were so shallow that a dog or jackal could exhume a corpse from them in a very short time. I could plainly see that a great many of the graves had been thus opened, and as the matting in which the bodies had been wrapped was in most cases sticking half out of the soft earth, it was easy to see exactly how much displacement there had been. A man at the relief camp told me that the

bodies were buried three feet deep, but I am sure that a foot and a half of earth is as much as there is over them. It seems to me, and I have had the impression a long time, that a weak point of our administration is the substitution of rebukes for punishments. Can it be gravely asserted that with our costly and complicated machinery for governing the country according to the most advanced principles of Western civilisation, no one, from the Viceroy to the Goodoor sweepers, can be held responsible for the state of things just described? Pitching into a subordinate seems to be the standard way of keeping things in order; but there is apparently no point where responsibility cannot be shifted farther down, and condign punishment be brought to bear upon a guilty head. I understand that when the collector came here the other day and ordered the new place for burials, he pitched into the tahsildar for what he saw. The result is the state of things to-day, and there never can be any other result until some one be made to feel that his appointment depends upon a change.

'The tahsildar declared to me to-day that there were no orders whatever as to the depth at which the corpses should be buried; and when I tried to horrify him by telling him that they were buried only a foot or two under the ground, he bowed assent in such a way as to imply that that was a matter within the professional knowledge of the grave-diggers. His duty consisted in signing an order for the disbursement to them of three annas for every corpse that was reported buried; also to pay four rupees to a man to occupy a shed near the burying-ground and see that people were decently buried in the proper place. I saw the shed, but not the occupant, or any result of his work.'

'March 27.

'In no part of his tour did Sir Richard Temple excite more notice by the rapidity of his movements than he did in this district, and in no place was the superficial character of his work more conspicuous. I do not venture such a remark, except on the general understanding that his Honour's errand is to mitigate the distress as well as to abolish the expenditure. His Honour "polished off" the East Coast Canal between sunrise and sunset, including the journey to and fro, and only discovered, as he was coming away, through the bumptiousness of an East Indian, that it was not of the usual nature of a relief work at all, and that he had been taking and giving instructions under a wrong impression. In one point that canal is the great relief work of the famine, for it is intended to be an exhibition of large bodies of labourers massed under a perfect system of organisation, and a centre of support to people from all the distressed districts. It is therefore a more important subject of consideration, and a most interesting object of inspection. There is to be seen there in one great theatre every degree of industry and idleness, from persons who are becoming rich on piecework to those who are determined to be paid for doing nothing; and the stiff problem conspicuously presents itself for solution, how to get the better of lazy fellows whom Government has bound itself to support by bringing them away from their native place. Sir Richard Temple allowed himself time to visit only one division of the work, and that was a division where only Nellore coolies were employed, and where all the payment is for piecework. His Honour had indeed arranged to go into a second and more important division, and was prevented by the want of a palkee; but the whole was to be done before evening, so I suspect the

sun had as much to do as the palkee with his not going. Having arrived at the spot, Sir Richard made no deviation from his usual course, but immediately proceeded to inspect the gangs person by person, and to pitch into the collector and district engineer whenever he saw a coolie looking better fed or better clothed than the rest. The caustic terms he uses on such occasions are becoming proverbial in this Presidency:—"Now look at this man! I declare he is positively robust; one of the nation's pride, in fact. If you admit men like that to State relief, you may take on the whole population at once. Look here, Mr. (naming the officer present), let me impress upon you my principle of a subsistence allowance, for beyond that the Government cannot go," &c., &c. The collector and the district engineer were mute at the feet of Gamaliel; but a supervisor whose sense of right exceeded his knowledge of manners informed the Special Delegate that the people were not getting State relief, but were constructing a canal for payment by the piece; that the work could not go on with inferior men, and that most of the coolies had been there before there was a word of the famine! His Honour did not stay much longer, but returned to Nellore, met the station at dinner at the collector's, and shot off for the cross-country road at Cuddapah. Sir Richard's minute on this subject shows that he saw the country on his way to and from Nellore, and I know that Goodoor was one of the places he took breath at. He carefully inspected the handful of labourers on the relief work there, and objected to several stout parties among them; but I am nearly certain that he did not go near the relief house nor the hospital, nor put himself in the way of seeing what the famine is doing there. His Honour, on his minutes, refers to the "depressed condition" of persons he saw in some villages, as

showing that a more rigid system of house-to-house visitation is required. Utter emaciation is the expression I selected in Madras, and have since uniformly used to describe cases such as I saw three of in Goodoor, five or six at the relief house in Naidupett, and perhaps eight in the dispensary here, and such as I expect to see fifty more of before I get back to Madras, as I shall take the route where I understand they are most common. In these cases the skin appears to be drawn over a fleshless skeleton; the gluteal muscles are replaced by a fold of loose skin, giving a deformed and repulsive aspect to the figure; the face has the look of a corpse, and the voice and strength are almost gone. Above these there are several degrees, with successively increasing numbers of examples, before one comes to what most people would understand by as moderate a word as "depression." If by depressed condition Sir Richard means what I have called utter emaciation, then that feature of the famine surely deserved as much of the Special Delegate's attention as the unnecessary expenditure to which his Honour exclusively devoted it. But if his Honour really saw nothing worse than depression, then he simply did not look properly.

'Stringent are the orders of Government about the prevention of starvation; that the sub-divisional officer, although nothing but an officer of the Department of Public Works, is bound to feed any man, woman, or child he sees in a famished state. Of course there are, as is always the case, a number of evil-disposed persons who go about fomenting discontent. These unflogged scoundrels possess a good deal of influence, and one or two will keep a whole gang on strike for days together. A favourite way by which they stir up the people is to remind them how they warned them in Bellary against yielding to the plausible but treacherous per-

suasions of the authorities about coming away to this dangerous district. There is too much reason to believe that the *maistries*, who in most instances came with the gangs from Bellary, are the foremost offenders in this way, but they manage to keep themselves in the background. More than once, however, a *maistrie* has been found spreading discord in a gang with which he had nothing to do, simply to strengthen his own party. The system of advances contributes more than any other cause to confusion and difficulty; for it keeps the coolies always in debt to the Government, and does away with every hold that the officers might have upon them. When a coolie arrives from Bellary he gets an advance before he does a hand's turn of work, and every time he strikes he gets another advance to induce him to begin work again; then he gets another advance if he idles, and another if he earns less than Sir R. Temple's allowance, and another if he gives up a day to disputing about some grievance, and another on every possible occasion when he can want one—all which is very demoralising. Moreover, the advances accumulate rapidly, for there are instances of men in good health earning but ten pies a day, while they are being paid two annas. Thus, between February 1 and February 16, 1,036 Bellary and Cuddapah coolies did an amount of work which, when estimated by the payments made to them, was found to have cost 5 annas $9\frac{3}{4}$ pies per cubic yard! Another thing is, it is felt that the coolies would give more trouble and do less work in any other place they might go to or be taken to. They must therefore be kept on the canal at all hazards. It frequently happens therefore, that coolies have to be forgiven past advances and allowed a new chance of beginning fairly, the natural and invariable effect of which is to increase their contempt for rules

and orders. I think myself that advances have been given too liberally. The fact has been proved hundreds of times in this famine that, although the natives are as liable as other people to the effects of slow starvation, they will, if it suits themselves, go cheerfully for several days upon a very limited allowance. I think, therefore, that in all cases where the people are not suffering already for want of food, a mere nominal advance should be given to them, say a quarter of a pound of rice, and no account taken of it. That would shut their mouths, discourage their cupidity, and cause no confusion in calculations; and I venture to think also that the mere exhibition of firmness would have a good moral effect, so that the experiment would never have to be tried two days in succession. Only the people are always so ready to take the chance of begging, that there is an incessant fear of their going off on the trudge, to turn up some day, famished paupers, at a relief camp fifty miles off, or perhaps as far away as Madras. If they think the food they earn, or which is given to them, is scarcely worth taking, they go off without a thought, determined not to work, and feeling that they cannot fare much worse wherever they go. More than one party of them have been known to come straight here to Nellore and besiege the collector or the district engineer; and everybody, from the Governor downwards, is in such mortal fear of a death occurring through starvation that their wants are supplied without loss of time, and that puts them in a position to dictate their own terms. In short, our present experiences are enough to make anyone a believer in despotic rule. I am beginning seriously to doubt if there is any way of satisfactorily meeting this or any future famine, except by treating the people who are thrown upon our hands as if they were a schoolful of refractory children.

Paupers receiving gratuitous relief require, if their lives are to be saved, to be shut up in camps and made to obey orders. As for relief works, if they are to mean anything at all, they must mean pressed labour. I do not think I told you that the sheds in the great Red Hills camp were constantly in need of repair or renewal owing to the paupers pulling out the palmyra leaves to sleep upon, although they had mats given them for that purpose. The same thing is done in the coolies' lines at the canal here, with this difference that, as each family have a hut to themselves, which it is their interest to take care of, the people all go to the latrine and hospital sheds when they wish to use the materials for fuel or any other convenient purpose. Is there any remedy but the flogging-post for such conduct?'

Of the people in a neighbouring district—Cuddapah, during the same period, Dr. Cornish says:—'I often regret that I have not a photographer temporarily attached to my office while moving about amongst the famine-stricken people of this Presidency. Words, at the best, can but feebly represent the actual facts, but if the members of Government could see the living skeletons assembled at feeding-houses as I see them, I do not think there would be much hesitation in arriving at a conclusion that the condition of the lower classes of the labouring poor of this district is most critical, and that the "weeding out" or reduction process, of which we have heard so much, may possibly have gone to greater lengths than may have been desired. I cannot myself view with any satisfaction statements showing sudden reduction of numbers on relief works. That many fictitious names appeared in the muster-rolls, and that the native supervisors robbed both the Government and their own countrymen in the early days of the famine, is but too notorious; but with all the

admitted defects of the relief system in its early organisation, the testimony of Sir Richard Temple on February 2 goes to prove that up to that time the poor were being kept alive. I wish I could say as much on March 24, but the real facts, however painful, I am bound to relate.

'When Sir Richard Temple inspected the relief houses here on February 2, it is noticed, "some of the recipients seen by Sir R. Temple at the Madanapully relief house were not yet in extreme destitution." In my visit I was accompanied by Mr. Gribble, the sub-collector, Mr. Traill, the executive engineer, Lieut. Money, on special famine duty, and Mr. Apothecary Wood, in medical charge of the station. The people were seated in rows awaiting the distribution of food. We have passed along each row in turn, scrutinising the condition of every individual. Out of the whole 800 odd we found only three women who appeared in moderately good condition and fit for work. Of these two had three or four young children each (the children being much reduced), and the remaining one had managed to slip in at the back of the enclosure without a ticket in the hope of getting a meal. I did not see a single man in a condition fit for work.

'What we did see was a large group of individuals in every stage and variety of starvation. We saw old men and old women bloated with dropsy, some with their legs covered with bad ulcers; we saw others again, and many of them men and women in the prime of life, who were literally moving skeletons. We saw children of all ages in such a condition of emaciation that nothing but a photographic picture could convey an adequate representation of their state. We noticed children hanging listlessly on their mothers' hips, slowly dying of diarrhœa, and others recently born, merely loose skin

and bone, atrophied, in fact, by the mothers' want of food before they came into the world.

'It is, of course, impossible to state with any probable accuracy, how many of these poor creatures will survive the famine. I expressed a hope to Mr. Ward that he might save 50 per cent. of them with care and suitable food. I trust that this estimate may be very largely exceeded, but knowing as much as I do of the very deadly nature of the disease we define as "chronic starvation," I am not very sanguine regarding the proportion that may be saved. I fear that a heavy mortality is inevitable. The new scale of food for relief camps will give a better promise of saving life.'

When dealing with this report the Government noted that, as respects the famine labourers, all this had occurred while the men were receiving at least two annas per diem. The collector was therefore not to be called upon to introduce the new subsistence wage which had been ordered for general adoption, without further enquiry and report. Mr. Price, the collector, was instructed to see whether the gangs had been short-paid from fraud on the part of the *maistries* or others; whether they had a difficulty in getting a sufficient allowance of food for their wages; or whether, finally, there had been any injudicious amount of task-work exacted, to account for the state of things described above.

Among the more interesting reports received by Government is one descriptive of the state of the people and the country, from Mr. W. H. Glenny, a civilian in charge of the Adoni taluk. He estimated at the period of greatest distress 80,000 to 90,000, *i.e.* half the population, would be on the hands of Government. Describing the occupations of the people, and the reasons why so many required relief of some kind

or other, Mr. Glenny says: 'An urban population in this country invariably contains a large proportion of paupers, of prostitutes, of professional beggars (religious and lay), of coolies, of domestic servants, of workers in metals, of potters of low caste, workers in leather, basket-makers, mat-weavers, &c. In nearly every town there are also weavers. But this class in Adoni town are far more numerous than is usual. There are also many dyers, cotton cleaners, and spinners. Now, the occupation of the weavers, dyers, and other artisans is gone for the present. People have nothing to spare for ordinary beggars (the religious beggars still seem to extort alms much as usual). The prostitutes suffer; many of them have come upon our works. Domestic servants, and the hangers-on which every native of consequence thinks necessary to his position, are turned adrift. Coolies are thrown out of work. The condition of the Madigas (out-caste leather workers), always wretched, is now deplorable. We have found that this very numerous class, as a rule, have kept off the works till quite lately, in consequence of which many are much emaciated. I believe that upon these poor people, accustomed as they are to be treated like unclean beasts by their countrymen, it was long before the idea dawned that the Government might be ready to save them also from death. I noticed that many batches of them first appeared in quick succession on the Adoni works a short time ago. Every one knows that the Mussulmans in Southern India are, of all other classes, the least thrifty and provident, the idlest and most self-indulgent. The Adoni Mussulmans have long been known as a bad class. They are the descendants of the retainers of the Mussulman Government. *Panem et Circenses!* is the cry with these people, and they have in this respect given the tone to their Hindu

townsmen. The other day there was an almost total abandonment of relief works for the purpose of amusement at the Mohorrum. Abandonment of wives or concubines and children, though not so prevalent as the women would have us believe, has undoubtedly been very common everywhere; in Adoni it has been far more general than elsewhere, because of the existence here of such numbers of polygamous Mussulmans of very bad type, and of no substance. The class of small ryots, very large in Adoni taluk, has had little good of the scanty harvest they may in a few cases have reaped. These, nominally land-holders, are for the most part virtually mere cultivating servants of some substantial man. Nothing is commoner than to hear from one of these poor men that his bullocks were carried off by the creditor when the total or partial failure of the crop made it clear that nothing else worth having could be got out of the unfortunate debtor.'

The Madras Government were not satisfied that the large reductions which were made agreeably to Sir Richard Temple's instructions were wise or prudent, and in some cases made enquiries as to what became of the coolies who had left the works. The reply from one source is interesting. Mr. Davidson, the acting collector of Kurnool, expressed the following opinion:

'In the early stages of the famine, when wages were high, task-work nominal, trustworthy native supervision rare, and European supervision very inadequate, shoals of people were induced to flock to the works, where they were indiscriminately admitted. A wide door for peculation was opened, and it was fully availed of. In proportion as trustworthy and efficient supervision became available, the opportunities for fraud and peculation diminished, and the gangs are now generally well in hand I calculate that about

25 per cent. of those who have left the works ought never to have been there, and will probably never return. That 20 per cent. were dummies, fraudulently entered on the muster rolls (*Kakula lekha patram*, "a numerical account of crows," as it is familiarly designated by natives). Probably some 25 per cent. may return as times get harder, as their own scanty means fail them, and as the harvest near the canal and under wells in Markapur is completed.

'Five per cent. emigrated to East Coast Canal.

'Five per cent. returned to the Nizam's territory.

'Five per cent. to the Venkatagiri Zemindari and elsewhere.

'Five per cent. are being gratuitously relieved, they having been eliminated from working gangs on account of age, infirmity, &c.

'Five per cent. prefer begging to task-work.

'This leaves a margin of five per cent. for inaccuracies in the foregoing estimate.'

Among the multitudinous orders issued at this period was the following, dated March 3, 1877:—

'His Grace the Governor in Council desires to call the earnest attention of all collectors, divisional officers, and officers in charge of famine relief operations to the instructions conveyed in paragraphs 9, 10, and 11 of the Proceedings of Government, dated February 5, 1877, No. 515, regarding the "residuum of the poor left in villages who cannot work, and who would die if left unaided." It was ordered that "for the lives of these the headmen of villages must be held responsible." Collectors must again be instructed to direct the headmen to feed these persons, and cooked food on a scale similar to that enforced at the camps must be provided. They must be furnished with funds to meet this charge, and required to furnish weekly accounts of the numbers

fed. It was added, "that every effort must be made for the verification of the relief given at villages, and it was pointed out that it would probably be necessary to appoint special officers to take charge of the camp and village relief within a manageable area, and that these inspecting officers were to keep and furnish weekly diaries." His Grace in Council attaches the greatest importance to this branch of the relief operations. . . . . Collectors must insist upon the punctual submission of the weekly returns by village headmen of the relief afforded, and where no such relief is reported in villages, in tracts where it is known that widespread distress prevails, the fact should at once arouse suspicion and receive prompt investigation. While every encouragement should be afforded to headmen of villages to carry out to the fullest extent the orders of Government, very severe notice should be taken of any neglect on their part, and exemplary punishment should follow wilful disobedience of these orders. The Board of Revenue are empowered to sanction such additional officers in each district, such as revenue inspectors, as may be required to ensure the most exact supervision of village relief officers, and to place at the disposal of the inspectors of camp and village relief a sufficient number of these subordinates to facilitate the thorough performance of their duty. His Grace in Council considers that a sufficient time has now passed since the issue of the Government Proceedings of February 5, to enable district and divisional officers to report on the results obtained; and he desires that these officers be called upon to submit, with the least possible delay, a clear statement exhibiting the number of villages in which effect has been given to the above orders, the number of persons relieved, and the amount expended.'

Some idea of the difficulty encountered in getting the people of India to leave their homes to obtain work elsewhere, appears in an order respecting the East Coast Canal. In a communication of the Financial Department, dated November 29, 1876, the attention of the collectors of the Bellary and Kurnool districts was specially called to this important famine work, and every arrangement connected with the transport of large bodies of men from these districts to the Eastern Coast Canal was carefully prescribed. At the same time the district engineer of Nellore, acting under instructions given to him in person, was sending recruiting parties into the distressed districts with details of the nature of the work and the wages which could be earned, with a view to these agents acting in concert with the collectors in removing a large proportion of able-bodied men and their families from the overcrowded local works to the Eastern Coast Canal. Up to March these efforts may be described as unsuccessful. This was caused partly by an outbreak of epidemic cholera at the commencement, which rendered it unsafe to carry large bodies of men and their families about the country; partly by an unfortunate misunderstanding, by which those who were not able-bodied were rejected by the officers in charge of the canal, and who wandered back to their districts to the discouragement of intending emigrants; and partly to the extraordinary pressure of work on district officers, which seems to have prevented them from carrying out the orders of Government with that vigorous perseverance which alone could secure success. 'The result has been,' says the Government Order, 'that this work, which can usefully employ 90,000 labourers, has only working on it about 30,000. Circumstances have now altered considerably. The epidemic disease on the route has ceased. The extreme

pressure from enormous crowds of persons clamouring for work is reduced, and the organisation on the Eastern Coast Canal is excellent. The site is healthy, food is abundant, shelter has been provided, and is available easily for increasing numbers; hospital and medical attendance are present, and the supervision is complete. His Grace the Governor in Council is therefore most anxious to reduce the numbers on road and similar works, many of which are of doubtful utility, in the districts of Bellary, Cuddapah and Kurnool, by the transfer of large numbers to the Eastern Coast Canal, and calls on the collectors of those districts to make the most strenuous efforts to carry out his wishes. His Grace is aware of the difficulties in the way. He is conscious of the not unnatural dislike entertained by many of the natives of this country to moving from the immediate vicinity of their homes, and the passive resistance that is offered to any such change, however beneficial it may be to those concerned. But he also believes that by tact, patience, and continued effort the difficulties may be overcome. He is averse to the employment of actual coercion. His Grace in Council prefers to trust to patient explanation of the intentions of Government by the superior officers concerned, to the offer of exceptionally advantageous terms to those who go to the Eastern Coast Canal, and to a temporary reduction of the numbers employed on local works to effect the object in view. The reduction of numbers on some works and the cessation of work in some places must be persevered in, and it must be left to the discretion of the officers in charge of districts and of relief works, by the exercise of temper and resolution to carry out the objects of the Government without endangering the lives of those who offer passive resistance. To induce the movement by other than coercive measures,

his Grace in Council is willing to sanction a system of bonus on a liberal scale to the gangsmen who bring gangs to the starting places, and again on their reaching their destination with a considerable proportion of their gangs. His Grace in Council will also be prepared to give a bonus of eight annas to every single able-bodied coolie who reaches the Eastern Coast Canal, and a bonus of one rupee to every able-bodied coolie who brings his family with him, provided that two members of every such family are able to work. Military officers are to be appointed as assistants to the divisional officers for the organisation of the transport of the labourers, and it will be desirable that these officers should travel with the earlier batches of coolies the whole way from their districts to the canal.' The presence of these officers it was thought would give courage to the gangs at starting, and they would secure their careful treatment on the way. A small guard of police was expected to accompany each body of coolies, and be under the orders of the officers in charge of them. Labourers on the East Coast Canal were to be paid at the following rates, according as they worked by task or piecework:—

(1) Those who work at piecework, at the ordinary Public Works Department rates, for all the work they can turn out.

(2) Those who work at taskwork, at the rate given below, provided they turn out 75 per cent. of the full ordinary Public Works Department scale of work.

For a man the value of	1 lb.	of grain plus	1	anna.
For a woman do.	1 lb.	do.	½	do.
For a boy or girl do.	½ lb.	do.	½	do.

The death returns for February and March give the following results:—

Deaths in February, 1877	No.	94,545
Do. „ 1876	„	42,498
Increase deaths . .	„	52,047

Deaths in March, 1877	. . . . .	No. 91,119
Do. „ 1876	. . . . .	„ 35,863
	Increase deaths . .	„ 55,256

The above returns, however, sad as they are, give an incomplete idea of the mortality actually existing. In a report submitted to Government in April 1877, Dr. Cornish remarked:—'I saw some 50 or 60 persons who cannot possibly survive many days or weeks. One young girl, about 10 years of age, a mere skeleton, on being lifted upright by her mother, fell down in a faint from sheer weakness.

'After seeing the feeding at the relief house I went to see the Subsidiary Jail, a very miserable place in the heart of the town, in the same building with the old Taluk Cutcherry. The inside yard was crowded with stores of Government rice, shutting out what little air might naturally reach the "lock-ups" allotted for prisoners. On my way back to the bungalow, just on the outskirts of the town, I came upon the dead body of an old Mussulman who had apparently got so far towards the relief kitchen, when he fell down and died, about two hours before I passed by. His cooking pots (quite empty) lay by his side. Scenes like this, according to Mr. Supervisor Mathews, have not been infrequent of late at Royachoti. In January last, after an outbreak of cholera amongst coolies employed on a large tank, some 53 human bodies were left exposed in the bed of the river which runs by the town, and I learn from him, as well as other district officials, that a very considerable number of bodies have been found by them in positions indicating that they have died solitary and alone, away from help and friends.

'I sent for the village munsiff to ascertain the mortality registered in the town of Royachoti during the last few months. He brought me extracts from the

register, showing 66 deaths in December, 32 in January, 46 in February, and 42 in March, up to the 26th instant. As the catechist informs me that more than the number (42) entered for March have died in the feeding camp sheds, I think it is quite clear that the registration does not give anything like the true rate of mortality. He shows no mortality at all from small-pox, while the great prevalence and virulence of this malady renders it certain that many deaths must have been due to it. A child of the catechist's died of small-pox last week, and the Brahmin police inspector of this station told me that his wife and four persons of his household were laid up with the disease, and that hardly a house was free of it. Of the 144 deaths registered in the three months ending February, 134 are stated to have been from "cholera." Royachoti is only a small town of about 3,000 inhabitants, but being filled with indigent emigrants the mortality is sure to be high. I did not find any arrangements in force for recording the deaths and causes of death in the sick poor residing in the relief sheds. I propose to address district authorities on the necessity of keeping accurate records of mortality in the various relief camps, as is now being done in the larger camps near Madras.

'From enquiries I have been making, I am quite certain that our system of death registration in the provinces has to a great extent broken down, and that we shall never know the true mortality of this dreadful season of famine and pestilence from the records of the village accountants. When the dead are so numerous that they lie unburied, when people leave their villages by wholesale, and when village officials fly from their posts in panic, we can never get accurate accounts of the vital statistics. I mention the subject here because I think it is right the Government should know that

the facts coming to my knowledge indicate a very high mortality of certain classes of the population, and that this mortality is very largely connected with the defective food supplies of the people, and that we must not expect to find the true mortality entered in the village registers.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE MONTHS OF APRIL AND MAY.

In the most favourable of years the month of April on the plains of Southern India is peculiarly disagreeable. The temperature is high, the atmosphere full of an invisible red dust blown from the roads where the metal has been ground to a fine powder, trees and shrubs and grass are of a coppery hue, and existence is very uncomfortable. At such times the Government take their flight to the Blue Mountains, and, in an atmosphere like the English spring *sans* the East wind, pass the most comfortable portion of their time. All the disagreeable concomitants of the season were in greater force than usual in April 1877 ; the long drought had intensified one and all of the peculiar features of the period. Yet no departure for the hills by the Government was seriously considered for a moment. His Grace the Governor felt—and his councillors shared the opinion—that their place was at head-quarters, where business could be despatched with the utmost promptitude. Thenceforward the greatest devotion to duty was manifested, and, however men might agree or disagree with particular features of 'the Duke's policy,' all bore homage to the steady, persistent, daily grappling with an infinity of details which his Grace exhibited. In this kind of work no man in India at the time could

surpass his Grace. But it became subsequently a subject of complaint that, whilst a microscopic view was taken of occurring events, the telescopic range over all the districts was defective. What was needed above all things at head-quarters in Madras, was an eye upon the whole field of disaster, from the Kistna river to Cape Comorin. It was complained that one was sacrificed to the other. But the complaint was not a fair one. It has also been remarked in an official paper, that 'thenceforward the utmost devotion to duty' was displayed by the Governor and his Council. This expression needs qualification. What is meant is that Sir Richard Temple and his meteor-like movements, which served to dazzle men's eyes, being at an end, men were better able to see what the Madras Government were doing and had done to meet the crisis. As events turned out, there were mistakes in policy, but as regards downright and thorough performance of duty, it would be impossible to find grander instances of persistent toil, under discouraging circumstances than were manifested by the Madras Government, from his Grace the Governor, right through the administrative chain, to the overseer in charge of relief works. Here and there there were defections, but they were few. Taken as a whole, the unpleasing task of grappling with distress was performed with high courage, and deserved better success than attended it.

The above remarks are intended to cover the whole of the period embraced in this chapter and the subsequent months. Collectors had been instructed to watch carefully the working of reduced diet scale; the Surgeon-General's department was put on the *qui vive* for the same purpose, and many interesting reports, to be considered in their proper place, were the result; the

Sanitary Commissioner, who had opposed with a courage equal to his ability Sir Richard Temple's proposals, was sent on tour to enquire into the working of the scheme and to report upon it. At the request of Sir Richard Temple, the Government of India, on its part, sent Dr. Townsend, Sanitary Commissioner to the supreme authorities, to make independent enquiry. The first official intimation which the Madras Government received of Dr. Townsend's visit was a copy of a minute recorded by Sir Richard Temple on a report by Dr. Townsend respecting the physical condition of relief labourers with reference to the reduced rate of wages, accompanied by the report itself. The Government said that of course Dr. Townsend's opinion would receive full consideration in connection with other facts and information they might from time to time be in possession of. They complained, however, that, as no communication had been made to them by the Government of India, they were not aware of the exact nature of the instructions given to Dr. Townsend, nor had they the opportunity of making suggestions as to the places to be visited. It was also subsequently complained that Dr. Townsend had left the Presidency without reporting his arrival or making any communication.

Sir Richard Temple's explanation of this episode is given in the following extract from a letter written by Mr. Bernard to the Government of India:—

'Dr. Townsend was deputed by the Government of India to advise Sir Richard Temple concerning the sufficiency of the reduced relief wage, and its effect on the condition of the people. Dr. Townsend joined the mission when Sir Richard Temple was in the Bombay Presidency, and he inspected gangs of labourers at and near Sholapore. The long railway journey from Calcutta to Sholapore in the heat had, however, brought

on an attack of dysentery, and Dr. Townsend was unable to do as much as he had wished.

'On the day Dr. Townsend entered the Madras Presidency Sir Richard Temple wrote and informed his Grace the Governor of Dr. Townsend's coming, and of the work he was to do in connection with the mission. On the same day I informed Mr. Garstin, the Secretary to the Madras Government, of Dr. Townsend's arrival, and of the inspections he hoped to make.

'Dr. Townsend inspected some 30,000 labourers, and then drew up a report of what he had seen, and of the impressions he had received. A copy of that report, with a minute recorded by Sir Richard Temple, was immediately forwarded to the Government of Madras; and Sir Richard Temple arranged with his Grace the Governor that Dr. Townsend, whose early return to ordinary duty with the Government of India was much desired, should visit Madras and wait upon his Grace.

'Meanwhile, Dr. Townsend had gone southwards to inspect certain Coimbatore gangs, regarding the physical condition of which there had been doubt. He was to have visited Madras according to the appointment already made on his way back from Coimbatore. But at that place he was again attacked by the same complaint which had afflicted him previously. And as the complaint did not at first yield to treatment, he decided not to go into Madras, but to return to Bombay at once. He at once intimated to his Grace the Governor's Private Secretary the reasons which had, to his regret, compelled him to leave the Madras Presidency without waiting upon his Excellency. And afterwards I explained more at length to Mr. Garstin, the Famine Secretary, the circumstances of Dr. Townsend's departure. Sir Richard Temple also explained to his Excel-

lency the Governor the sickness which prevented Dr. Townsend from presenting himself at Madras.

'Sir Richard Temple regrets much that Dr. Townsend should thus have been unavoidably prevented from waiting on his Grace the Governor of Madras, and laying before his Excellency the impressions he had received from his inspections of relief labourers in the Bombay and Madras Presidencies.

'Dr. Townsend had, however, the advantage of meeting at Cuddapah, by special appointment and arrangement, the Sanitary Commissioner of Madras.'

Another source of disquiet, and even of dispute, between the superior and local Governments, was a statement in the weekly telegram of the former to the Secretary of State of the 30th March, 'that professional agency exists in Madras districts, and helps the civil officers, but is not adequately employed in exacting task-work.' The rejoinder of the authorities in Madras was, that if, in Madras, there were sufficient large works to employ thereon three-fourths of the whole relief labour, as was said to be the case in Bombay, the staff of the Public Works Department could be much more efficiently utilised. Such, however, was not the case, nor in certain districts could large works be devised, while the desire of the Madras Government in the early stage of the famine to be allowed to commence some large works did not meet with approval from the Government of India. This retort is severe, and on the face of it just. But it is not fair to the Government of India. It was known that the prohibition against large works had been removed, and the change of policy had been effected with so much wrangling—(see Chapter II., 'A Game at Cross Purposes in High Quarters,' in the Narrative of Bombay Famine later on in this volume) —that the merits of the question must have been

known. Probably the real reason why large works were not undertaken at this period was the expectation that early in June the south-west rains would fall and the people would return to their homes to plough and sow their lands; in consequence of which there would be an exodus from large works, and they would be left in an incomplete condition. Other reasons, however, entered into the calculations of the administrators in Madras, which will be stated in their proper connection.

'The tone of Sir Richard Temple's minutes was admirable, and his apparent consideration for the Madras Government seemingly perfect,' said one who was acquainted with all that came from the Delegate's pen, some months after the event. 'I could not understand, therefore, how it was so much opposition was raised to his mission in Madras and so much bad feeling was engendered. Subsequently I was brought into contact with him, and then I wondered no longer.' Certainly, Sir Richard Temple was indiscreet at times, assuming the *rôle* of arbiter in the presidency, praising this Madras official and depreciating the other, and erring most egregiously in matters of administration. Certain traders in Bangalore had a grievance regarding alleged overcharges on grain conveyed by the railway. They laid this grievance before Sir Richard Temple, who directed Captain Bisset to write a memorandum to the Government of Madras suggesting a refund of money said to have been wrongly paid. The despatch was written, and the Madras Government was very irate at being so treated. 'They were not,' they said, 'aware that any instructions had been issued authorising Sir Richard Temple to deal with matters of administrative detail.' As to the merits of the question itself, they did not think that any opinion should be expressed without further inquiry on certain points,

which were mentioned. Many other suggestions were made in minutes penned late in March or early in April by Sir Richard Temple, but all or nearly all had been thought of by the Madras authorities, and put into practice before the Delegate's proposals were received. For instance, the Collector of Salem had anticipated the suggestion that an officer should be sent to examine into the condition of the people inhabiting the low hills, valleys, and jungly places in and about the Shevaroy hills; while the Government itself, in sending Mr. Puckle to Nellore district, had anticipated the proposal of Sir R. Temple that 'a selected European officer of smartness and ability' should be sent to Kalastri. Mr. Puckle's duties were subsequently enlarged. He was nominated to do for the Government of Madras what Sir Richard Temple had done for the administration generally. His instructions, dated May 1, were as follows:—

'Mr. Puckle will commence by inspecting the Venkatagiri Zemindari and the western portion of the Nellore district, passing thence to Cumbum and the eastern parts of the Kurnool district, and after completing his inspection of that district will proceed to Bellary.

'The inspection is intended primarily to ascertain:—*First.* The continued sufficiency of the relief works provided for the wants of the locality in which situated. *Second.* The general adequacy of the arrangements made to afford relief and the efficiency of the supervising staff. Attention will, however, be specially directed to noting—*Third.* Any indications of the abuse of the liberality of Government or of fraud. *Fourth.* Inefficiency on the part of officers. *Fifth.* The state of arrangements for village relief. *Sixth.* The state and utility of the relief-camps. *Seventh.* The suitableness

for relief labour and probable subsequent utility of the various works in progress or proposed. *Eighth.* The state of the water-supply. *Ninth.* The state of the markets in respect of food-supply. *Tenth.* The condition of agricultural stock. *Eleventh.* How far the orders of Government are being carried out.

'Elaborate reports are not needed, but a diary is to be kept, and a copy of each day's entry is to be posted to the Famine Secretary to Government daily, in which notes on each of the above eleven points are to be entered, along with any remarks which may suggest themselves in connection with the condition of the people, sanitary or otherwise; it being, however, borne in mind that minute investigations of the health and strength of labourers are not needed, special medical officers having been detailed to discharge this duty.'

In the third week in April Sir Richard Temple left the Madras Presidency, and a great sense of relief was experienced by all classes. The last Madras official with whom he had to do was Dr. Cornish, who had some special interviews with him at Bellary. Soon afterwards the Governor gave a public breakfast in the banqueting hall at Madras. Dr. Cornish was present, and more than once the question was put to him with great eagerness, 'Are you sure Sir Richard has *really* left the Presidency?'

All through the month distress had deepened, as was evidenced by the increasing number needing support. The progressive increase may be noted by the following figures:—

	April 1.
On Relief Works	695,000
On Gratuitous Relief	115,000
Total . . .	810,000

April 15.

On Relief Works	708,014
On Gratuitous Relief	225,289
	933,303

A great portion of the increase was owing to the fact that the numbers fed at the relief-camps, in the town of Madras, and at the Red Hills, had not been before included in the weekly return. Exclusive of these, however, the numbers had increased by 71,609. This was attributed by the local officers to the extension of village relief, and to the inclusion in some of the returns of the children of labourers under seven years of age.

April 21.

On Relief Works	738,788
On Gratuitous Relief	277,366
	1,016,154

April 28.

On Relief Works	719,849
On Gratuitous Relief	333,646
	1,053,495

Thenceforward, till the great change in administration—and for some time subsequent to that date also—with two exceptions, increases were noted week by week in alarming numbers.

Several subjects were greatly exercising the mind not only of the Madras Government, but also of the people of India generally, the chief of which was the reduced ration. The public and the press (with the exception of three or four newspapers in the north), strongly condemned the 'experiment,' and asked that it should be withdrawn. The *Indian Charivari* went so far as to publish a cartoon representing Sir Richard disturbed in his sleep by numberless phantoms of skeleton frames, while he was made to mutter certain lines the reverse of complimentary to his humanity.

A gentleman who spent his Christmas holidays in 1877 in the Shevaroy Hills, and went into the jungle to shoot woodcock, was horrified at finding the bleaching skulls and skeleton-forms of many who had crept under bushes for shelter from the sun, and had died there. In one group he saw the remains of two adults and three children, evidently a family who had died in company.

The Madras Government shared the anxiety which was felt by the public, and they had more reason for disquiet, as they were in possession of reports from the Sanitary Commissioner and from officials, all of an alarming character, reports which were not published till some time afterwards. There were only one or two districts which did not tell of great deterioration in the physique of the people. The explanation of the reports not being uniform is thus given:—'From other districts no marked change in the condition of the labourers is reported. It is found, however, to vary considerably; for, while some gangs have deteriorated, others have held their ground. This is partly explained by the large proportion of low caste among the gangs, some of whom have sustained themselves by feeding on the carcases of dead cattle, or by devouring snakes and lizards.'

By way of example, one report recording great decadence may be quoted. Mr. Price, acting collector of Cuddapah, accompanied a number of returns with the remark: 'The heading "good" will show how very few were considered by me fit for real work. The rest were, in a greater or less degree, going down hill. Many were fine men of the ryot class, who, not long ago, were strapping fine fellows, but who are now losing, as I ascertained by feeling them, all hardness of muscle and roundness of form. The women were in equally bad condition, and several of the very bad were

little more than animated skeletons. The state of the children was very indifferent. Some thirty persons were taken out of the gang and put upon gratuitous relief. They were utterly unfit for any work.' He added: 'I can assure Government that I am not in the least carried away by my feelings ; I have been now so long at famine work, and have seen so much misery and so many sickening sights, that I can consider matters coolly. I have no hesitation in saying that a continuance of the present wages for another fortnight to the coolies seen by me yesterday will render quite half of them fit for only gratuitous relief.'

The opinion of the Government that a change should be made was strengthened by a report from Dr. Gordon, Surgeon-General British Medical Department, and Honorary Surgeon to the Queen, and Dr. Smith, Surgeon-General Indian Medical Department. They suggested even in relief camps, where a large diet was provided, an increase, and forwarded for adoption 'a diet which is a slight modification of the jail dietary for ordinary non-labouring prisoners.' It speaks great things for the patience and law-abiding tendencies of the people of Southern India, that they remained fairly honest and did not hanker after the flesh-pots of the prison.

The Governor and his Councillors were unceasing in their efforts to induce the Secretary of State to give them permission to increase the ration. Amongst other arguments used was one which is stated thus, in a despatch dated 12th May:—'We enclose, for your Lordship's information, two tabular statements, compiled from the monthly statistical returns of the mortality among the population of the Presidency up to the end of February last, which will show your Lordship the marked effect which disease and famine have had on

the normal death-rate in the distressed districts. Your Lordship will perceive that the deaths in these districts have risen from 25,086 in October to 80,674 in February, while the ratio per mille has risen from 19·7 in October to 67·9 in February. These figures, if not quite accurate, as we can hardly assert them to be, err on the side of short registration.' They also pointed out that it was worthy of note that 'while in Bengal, during the the famine of 1873–74, a rise in the price of the staple food-grains beyond 10 seers, or 20 lbs., for the rupee, was considered to indicate the point at which State intervention to sell grain was necessary, the policy of the present year has left the population of the Madras Presidency generally subject to the distress occasioned by much higher prices without any similar State intervention.' The telegraph was used; a good deal of pressure was exerted at the India Office, and the result was that the Marquis of Salisbury expressed a wish to the Government of India, that much restriction in the matter of wages on relief works should not be imposed on the local Government. The Government of India at once intimated that they had no intention of restricting the discretionary action of the Madras Government, and the latter, therefore, notified that the lower scale of wages should be abolished and the higher one everywhere adopted on works. The ration had been tried for four months, and the decided preponderance of direct testimony—Drs. Harvey, Townsend, and Lyon alone excepted—was that the ration was insufficient. Testimony on this point will be found in the section of this work specially devoted to the one-lb. ration. The reports from inspecting and supervising officers of experience and professional skill was to the general effect that the physical condition of work-people on the lower scale of

wages was seriously and rapidly deteriorating, and that they were becoming enfeebled and incapable of sustained exertion; while, where these results were not immediately apparent, it had been generally found (as has been already stated), that the wage had been supplemented from other sources; and more food had been obtained. The severity of the pressure of distress had at this time (May) become more intense; the effects of prolonged privation were more distinctly marked; extraneous sources of aid were to a great extent exhausted; the solar heat was increasing with the advancing season and adding to suffering; and a decided shifting of the workers from relief-works to gratuitous relief, as weakly and emaciated, was manifest. The chief argument for the adoption of the lower wage was economy of State funds. The Madras Government did not lose sight of this important matter. They made an estimate and found that if the higher scale was everywhere substituted for the lower one, where that scale was in force, the additional expense to the State might amount to about $1\frac{3}{4}$ lakhs of rupees per mensem. They had, however, directed that the introduction of the system of executing works by piece-work rather than by task-work, should be encouraged, and anticipated that, though the expenditure might be actually greater than before, they would get a better return for the money expended than was possible under the system of task-work, and that they might place some check on the increasing expense of gratuitous relief.[1]

There is no need to 'pile Ossa upon Pelion' in the form of incidents showing the suffering still endured in portions of the Presidency. Two passages from returns sent in to Government may be quoted as

[1] The order of the Madras Government decreeing the change will be found quoted in full in the section on the 1 lb. ration.

showing the inefficiency of the village officials for the disbursement of relief—the agency relied upon by Sir Richard Temple in his proposals. Mr. Underwood, Assistant Collector of Nellore, in a report to Mr. Grose, gives the following facts:—

'*Relief Camps and Houses.*—There were four of the latter during the month of April; now, however, acting under your orders, they have been closed, and two camps established—one at Yepelaguntah, the other at Naranda. The expenditure for gratuitous relief was as follows:—

People Fed				Quantity of Rice	Value of Rice	Contingencies	Total.
Male	Female	Children	Total				
				Ps. Ts. Seers.	Rs. As. P.	Rs. As. P.	Rs. As. P.
5,382	7,819	9,563	22,764	8 5 24⅝	1,445 0 11	314 13 9	1,759 14 8
Paid Children at rate of 3 pies each				.....	.....	.....	570 5 6
Fed Children of Coolies A.				.....	.....	.....	128 0 11
Total cost of gratuitous relief				.....	.....	...	2,458 5 1

'The feeding of children is explained thus:—It is very common to find a man or woman in first-rate condition whilst his or her child is a mere skeleton, even when three pies are given. In those cases I knock off the three pies and feed the child. Roughly, the cost of feeding each person was a fraction under annas 1·3.

'The ration is increased under recent orders:—

Gosha Females.

	Number Fed			Rice.	Cost thereof	Contingencies	Total
	Females	Girls	Total				
				Ps.Ts.Seers.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Udayagiri	5,261	1,686	7,947	3 3 24	558 4 8	73 15 10	632 4 6
Dasarapalli	1,751	806	2,557	0 19 3	169 10 5	24 14 2	194 8 7
Total	8,012	2,492	10,504	4 2 37	727 15 1	98 14 0	826 13 1

'I give the above in full. It will be seen that in two villages only 350 girls and women of the Mahomedan persuasion required food daily. Now I utterly decline to believe that there are that number of Mussulman females of the higher rank in the two villages. It is almost insulting to one's intellect to have such a return sent. An inquiry will be instituted.

'*Village Inspectors.*—Four Settlement Gomastahs were told off to the duty. I ordered their weekly diaries to be abstracted in English on the back and sent to me. They have not been sent. In the early part of the month I did a good deal of inspection. I found the people generally healthy, and about six to ten bad cases in each village. People capable of walking were sent to the relief house. Those very infirm the munsiff was ordered to feed. I hope the system will work now you have sanctioned an advance to the circle officers, and that the munsiff will not have to send to the taluk cutcherry to get payment for the cost of feeding. I have strong doubts however. One day, about 10 A.M., I strolled into Yepelaguntah and found the circle officer making a very wide detour round the Mallah dwellings. I asked him how he expected to find out the needy if he did not go into the village. He said he could

not go into the village, but he would order the people out. Now my experience is you must go in and rout the people out. To the same point is the answer of my head-clerk. I was in doubt about the condition of a Mallah boy, so I said to Ramdoss, "Just feel that boy's arm." He replied that he really could not touch a Pariah. So I had to do it myself. I see no occasion to dismiss my circle officers, as I could get no better.'

From Kurnool an officer wrote:—

'Efforts are being made to check the abuse by village officials of the power which has been given to them to afford relief to those who for the want of it might be in danger of starvation. In the course of my tours I have taken every opportunity of visiting the villages on my way from camp to camp, and mustering persons in receipt of alms. Considerable reductions have lately been made, and the villagers are beginning to understand to whom they are *not* to give food; whether they are equally clear as to who is entitled to be fed may be open to doubt. I lately found a skeleton crouching outside a village lungerkhana; it was that of a man, still alive, though unable to stand and scarcely able to articulate; the lips had disappeared and the whole framework of the bones was distinctly discernible through the skin, by which alone they were covered. This creature was not on the lungerkhana list, and the Reddy explained that he had come from another village. This was evidently a case which the system of village relief had failed to reach.'

In April the heavy strain of famine duties began to tell upon the officials employed, and some had to go away on leave. Mr. Howe, of the Bengal Civil Service, who had been working very hard in the Bellary district for two months, was compelled to take a sea voyage for the

benefit of his health, and embark for China. Mr. Farmer, who had been in the very thick of the famine in the worst part of Kurnool, had been compelled, like Mr. Gribble, of Cuddapah, who had left a little time before, to go to Europe. The work of a relief official in any of the districts during the famine was not to be envied. It was downright hard campaigning. Mr. Cotton, of the Bengal Service, was attacked with small-pox and died after a few days' illness.

Two important events combined to render the month of May noteworthy in the annals of the famine. One was a censure of Madras officials by the Viceroy in Council; the other was a heavy cyclonic downpour of rain, which did much harm to the country and but little good. The *Gazette of India*, of the 5th of May, contained a resolution introducing 130 folio pages of tabulated statistics, and information relating to the distressed districts in the Madras Presidency. The statement consisted of 'extracts from the information furnished by the Government of Madras on November 14, and December 15, 1876, and January 4, 1877, in accordance with the telegram from the Government of India, of October 30, 1876, and of summaries of the reports on each taluk, called for by the Government of India on December 2, 1876.' The ground covered by these statements will be found described in the following 'headings.'

'(*a.*) A careful estimate of the amount (if any) of the crop which has been saved, calculated in annas, on the assumption of an average yield being represented by 12 annas; *kharif* and *rabi* should be shown separately; if there be any prospect of further sowings it should be mentioned.

'(*b.*) An estimate, as close as may at the time be practicable, of the amount of revenue to be remitted.

'(*c.*) Information as to the mortality, past and anti-

cipated, among cattle and agricultural stock; the measures already adopted by Government and the people, their result, and suggestions for the future.

'(*d.*) The nature of the water-supply, extent of its failure, further anticipated failure up to next rains, and remedial measures possible, if any.

'(*e.*) The course of prices weekly of each of the principal food-grains from October 1 up to the date of report in each case, and six years' average.

'(*f.*) The local stocks as far as ascertainable; the centres, railway stations or otherwise, whence further supplies are being, or may be, drawn, and the probability of private enterprise being sufficient to maintain them, as also of a fall in prices owing to ample importation.

'(*g.*) The character of the population, whether high or low caste, poor or well-to-do, purely or only partly agricultural, and, if the latter, in what proportions urban or artisan; also the character of the land-holders, whether large, wealthy, able to aid their tenants and likely to do so, or the reverse.

'(*h.*) The movements of the people; how far emigration has taken place, and with what result (have the people bettered themselves or merely gone elsewhere to starve, or are they returning?), and whether further emigration is possible.

'(*i.*) The relief works already started, their sufficiency or otherwise, and the further works which are considered practicable, arranged in the order of their necessity.

'(*j.*) The nature and amount of charitable relief given to travellers, and to the aged, infirm, &c., who are unable to work.

'(*k.*) The number of persons whom the Government has on its hands, at date of report, for relief (1) by

works, (2) by charitable measures, and the number, roughly estimated, which it is likely to have on its hands on March 1, May 1, and July 1.'

In their resolution the Government of India state that they called for these returns about the same time that they asked for similar details from the Presidency of Bombay and the Province of Mysore. They then proceed, in paragraph 3 of their resolution, to say:—'The reports of the Bombay local officers were sent in to their immediate superiors in a generally complete state about the close of the year, and, together with the views of the Government of Bombay, were received by the Government of India in time to be considered and summarised, with orders thereon, in the *Gazette of India* of February 22 last. The reports from Mysore, though not quite so complete or trustworthy as those from Bombay, were similarly dealt with by March 10. His Excellency the Governor-General in Council regrets to observe that the reports of the local officers in the distressed districts of the Madras Presidency have not, with some notable exceptions, been characterised by the same punctuality, accuracy, or completeness. Their various deficiencies in important particulars have been sufficiently commented on by the Madras Board of Revenue, and have been to a great extent supplemented by the series of elaborate and able reviews of the several districts by the Board itself, which have accompanied them. His Excellency in Council is willing to make the most ample allowance for the irksomeness and difficulty which must have been felt in submitting detailed statistics by officers who were labouring under the practical difficulties of organising relief for clamorous and starving multitudes; but is constrained to observe that had they more generally grasped the imperative need of temperate and thorough diagnosis of the condition of

affairs around them at a very early stage of famine, the exaggerated impressions which were in many instances received, and the excessive and uncalled-for relief which was consequently given, might have been alike avoided, and the general policy of Government might have been, in important particulars, different from what it was. While thus commenting on a general tendency which has had a not unimportant influence upon the conduct of affairs, his Excellency the Governor-General in Council cannot withhold a tribute of admiration to the energy, ability, and self-devotion which the local officers of the Madras Presidency, of all grades, have uniformly displayed, to the humanity by which their measures, even if at times in excess of the occasion, have been prompted, and the loyalty with which they have accepted and endeavoured to carry out the famine policy of the Government of India, as set forth in the instructions of January 16 last, and personally explained by Sir Richard Temple in the course of his mission.'

The effect of this paragraph was like a spark falling upon a large quantity of gunpowder. The explosion was terrific. At that particular juncture, and for some months subsequently, the minds of the majority of the people of Madras were fully possessed of one thing above all others, viz.: that the Supreme Government was sceptical as to there being a famine in Southern India. Feelings of the utmost resentment were cherished, and very hard things of the Viceroy and his Councillors were said. The appointment of Sir Richard Temple first caused annoyance when it was discovered that his *couleur de rose* representations were accepted as a correct statement of affairs, and seeing the Delegate's suggestion of a reduced ration was in high favour because it would effect a saving of 25 per cent. in

relief payments, a feeling of distrust was engendered. Many little circumstances combined to deepen this feeling, such for instance, as that Lord Lytton proceeded to Simla in April instead of visiting Madras, and that, whilst all Sir Richard Temple's minutes and each of the memoranda of his staff were published in the *Gazette of India*, Dr. Cornish's replies to the Delegate on the food return were not published. (The chief paper from the pen of the Sanitary Commissioner, it should be stated, was published in the *Gazette of India* a few weeks subsequently to this period.) Add to this, the knowledge that officials were worked to their utmost, that some had died under the severe pressure, that week by week the calamity was growing greater, and that above all, like the thick black cloud over Vesuvius whence lightnings flash betokening danger, there was a fear that the south-west monsoon would fail, when the disaster would be terrible. At this time, too, the reduced ration was still in operation, and much excitement was evinced regarding it. Even now there are passages in the papers of the Government of India which strike the mind as being very severe, *e.g.*, 'exaggerated impressions,' 'excessive and uncalled-for relief,' &c., which are hardly justified by facts, even though Sir Richard Temple did reduce the numbers on works by some hundreds of thousands.

Most of the Indian journals condemned the publication of censure upon Madras officials at that juncture. In Madras, as was natural, the strongest feeling was evoked. One Madras journal (the *Mail*) said it would be happy to do everything in its power to give effect to the following suggestion which had been made by a correspondent:—'Is there any chance of getting up a demonstration against the conduct of the

Supreme Government? Anything more mean and cruel than the resolution just issued is scarcely conceivable. Even the *Pioneer* condemns it. It would do infinite honour to the heads of the Madras Government were they to telegraph home their resignation at the end of the famine, for Lord Lytton's charges seem to be directed more against the Duke and his Council than against the other executive officers. An earnest and vigorous remonstrance should be telegraphed to Lord Salisbury and *The Times*.' Another journal (the *Madras Times*), prefacing its remarks with a wish to separate Lord Lytton personally from the act of his Government, said: 'We do not know that we have ever set about a task with greater regret and sorrow than we feel in respect to the immediate duty before us, which is that of noticing the manner—harsh, unfeeling, and impolitic—of Lord Lytton with regard to the Madras Government and its officers, as to the way in which they are dealing with the famine now devastating the country. We experience this feeling with respect to Lord Lytton himself and the circumstances which exist. No Governor General, we think, ever came to India with a more determined desire to do that which is right and fair than did Lord Lytton. This is evident in every word that his Excellency speaks and in every action that he performs. We can conceive of him being very distressed at the thought merely of doing injustice, either to the people of the land or to those set in authority over them. For high-mindedness he has had his peers in those who, before him, have had supreme rule, but as regards anxiety to do the thoroughly fair thing to everybody, we question if he has had his peer among all the Governors General who have preceded him. Yet it seems as if Lord Lytton's period of authority would be marked by more soreness of feeling amongst

subordinates and more real injustice, leading necessarily to a perfunctory performance of duty, than has happened in the whole period of British rule in India. His virtues are turned against him. Having such great faith in Lord Lytton, and being prepared to give to his acts all the support our position enables us to accord, it is more in sorrow than anger that we find ourselves compelled to-day to indignantly protest against his Excellency's sayings and doings. If our respect and confidence in the individual would have impelled us to hold our hand from censure and blame, the circumstances of the country, and particularly the distress and misery around us, which threaten to intensify and become much worse, grievously worse, would have impelled us to endure many things until after the crisis was past and the difficulty overcome, when we might have spoken that of which our mind was full.' The *Madras Times* supported the idea of a protest to some extent, but added, 'Better still, let Lord Lytton spend a month in the Presidency amongst famine officials, and if he does not then take the chair at an indignation meeting, it will not be because he does not think such a meeting necessary, but because he will (1) either do away with the necessity for such a gathering, or (2) refrain for the reason that such action would not be seemly for him to take. Of the necessity of some action his Excellency would have no doubt.' Nothing came of the proposal for a public meeting; other events of importance crowded the arena, the censure was passed by—it was not forgotten or forgiven—and attention was fixed upon new subjects which demanded immediate notice.

Early in May, the Governor left Madras city on a short tour in the Northern districts, that he might see for himself how the largest public work in the Presi-

dency—the East Coast (subsequently named the Buckingham) Canal—was progressing. The sky had become unwontedly cloudy, and the period being one in which cyclones were probable, it was anticipated that an atmospheric disturbance of this nature would take place. The anticipation proved correct, and from May 18 to 21 a terrific cyclone raged over the city of Madras, over a portion of the coast region to the north, and some distance to the south and inland. More than 20 inches of rain fell in three days, and the great famine year of 1877 will appear in Madras meteorological records as the year of heaviest rainfall for a long period. The quantity which fell was at least half a year's average of normal rainfall. Once the storm was over, the face of the country was altered, and it was deemed not to be an exaggeration to say that the grass could be seen to grow and the blades heard springing up! The rivers on the east coast were in flood, and the Governor was weatherbound on the banks of the Cortelliar river. A boat was sent from Madras, but before it reached the place where it was wanted, a native craft had been found, and by this his Grace crossed.

Even the rain which fell was a source of disquiet, so much of it was wasted. After such a crisis as had been passed through, and with much suffering still to come, arising from the want of water, the least that might have been expected would be that when rain did come it would not be permitted to run to waste. Yet, on the day the rains ceased, and for many days after, lamentations were upon almost every lip as millions of gallons of water were seen to flow away entirely unused, much of which might, and ought, to have been stored against a dry and sunny day—the oriental equivalent for the proverbial 'rainy day' of England, which needs providing against. As an instance of the frightful

waste of waters which occurred, the case of the Adyar river may be taken. Nothing was done to conserve the water in its channel. For three days the river flowed full from bank to bank—250 yards wide at the Marmalong bridge. In the middle of the stream, for the width of one hundred yards at the least, the current was moving at the rate of two miles an hour: the depth of water was four feet on an average. It may be that there was not tank accommodation available for the storage of more water. But, even from the tanks, the waste was enormous. The Marmalong tank at Saidapett (a suburb of Madras) may be taken as an indication of the waste permitted. This tank, when it was seen by the present writer a few days after the rain, was discharging over its waste weir a volume of water six yards wide and one yard deep, flowing at the rate of five miles per hour. The reason given for this outflow was that, if the water were retained, some of the banks of the tank might give way. Yet the level of the water in the tank was below what it frequently had been, and no disaster followed. The truth was this: the budget for petty repairs of tanks was so cut down at the beginning of the revenue year, that funds were not available for carrying out such precautionary works as were absolutely needful. The system by which works are done is so unsatisfactory that engineers, though they see the necessity for saving water, are unwilling to take the responsibility of keeping the water in the tanks, in the absence of that protection to the banks which they feel is necessary. They, therefore, choose the lesser of two evils, and, rather than risk a breach of the banks, with consequent flooding of the country around, and much damage, they consider it wise to let the water run to waste, and keep the level in the tank very low. Nine months previously, when

Lord Lytton issued his minute about the necessity of economy everywhere, and called upon the local Governments to report what savings could be effected upon their budget estimates, the Madras Board of Revenue reported that a considerable saving could be made on 'estimates for the annual petty repairs to tanks, channels, &c.' The consequences ought to have been obvious. What they were in one instance has been shown, and that was but one instance out of many. Tanks are the prime pre-requisites for cultivation in many parts of India, and, when economy is required, they are the very last things which should be tampered with. When they are neglected, the result is a flow towards the sea of a precious fluid which represents in passing away unused a sacrifice of human lives.

As soon as the Government of India had received telegraphic communications of the heavy rainfall, they requested the local Government to issue instructions to all district officers to ascertain as far as possible what effect the present rains would have on the agricultural prospects of the year. Accordingly, orders were issued, and some of the collectors furnished the information required, which the local authorities transmitted to the Government of India. In the reports sent the collectors stated that the people then receiving relief expressed great desire to return to their respective villages, and orders had been issued for pecuniary help being afforded to enable them to reach their homes. Agricultural operations commenced in the Chingleput and South Arcot districts. But, whilst this statement was made, the returns published week by week did not support this gratifying intelligence. The fact was the rains had been local and had also been very severe—so severe that agricultural operations had been more hindered than helped

by them. The month of May had commenced with the following numbers supported by Government:—

On relief works	719,846
Gratuitously relieved	333,646
Total . .	1,053,492

On the 26th of the same the numbers were:—

On relief works	792,118
Gratuitously relieved	381,454
Total . .	1,173,572

During this month the Madras Government were addressed by the supreme authorities on the subject of undertaking large works. The local Government were informed that 'Sir Richard Temple has made to the Government of Madras on the dates specified in the margin,[1] various representations on this important subject. While admitting that in many of the Madras districts relief has been economically managed from the first, he points out that in others the numbers in receipt of relief are apparently excessive compared with equally distressed localities elsewhere; and that the number of relief labourers in the Madras Presidency under Public Works agency is only 11½ per cent. of the total number on the works. . . . . There would appear to be some misapprehension arising from different applications of the term "large works." In so far as it extends to undertakings of primary magnitude, such as the East Coast Canal and other irrigational projects, there may be, as indicated in Sir Richard Temple's own minute of February 10, some difficulty in devising them in the Madras Presidency, or, at any rate, in doing so in time to be of use in the present juncture. But the term would appear to be used by

[1] February 10; March 18; March 29; April 10; April 17; April 20; April 24 (two).

Sir Richard Temple in his minutes above referred to in the more limited sense of works capable of employing about 1,200 to 1,500 labourers and upwards. This is the sense in which the term is used in the Bombay Presidency, and a reference to paragraph 9 of the Bombay Weekly Statement No. XXIV. (*Gazette of India*, May 5), will show that of the large works upon which the Public Works agency is found to be so advantageous, fifteen have less than 2,000 labourers, and only sixteen more than 5,000 employed upon them. And of large works, using the term in the same sense, there would appear to be no lack in the Madras Presidency, for it appears from the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, No. 1817, of the 20th ultimo, paragraph 9, that 66 per cent. of the total number of labourers are employed upon works having 1,500 and upwards, and that the average number per work is no less than 4,591.'

Towards the end of the month a despatch was sent from Simla which was of considerable importance. It will be quoted here, but the points it sets forth will be better discussed in the next chapter in dealing with the period when the policy was developed. The despatch says that his Excellency the Governor General in Council had had under his consideration Sir Richard Temple's minute of the 22nd April, in which he recognised the humane care and the skill with which the large relief camps are conducted, and remarked as follows:—

'But still the fact remains that the death rate among the inmates of camps is terribly high; that such diseases as are engendered among gatherings of poor people appear and re-appear, and that the air and surroundings of these camps are very depressing. For the little children especially the life must be very

depressing indeed. Some of these troubles will, I fear, be aggravated when cold and rain come on, and make relief camp life even less endurable than it now is.

'The remedy which Sir Richard Temple suggested was the gradual drafting off of the inmates of these camps to their own homes, to be there cared for under the system of house-to-house visitation and village relief. His Excellency considered Sir Richard Temple's suggestion to be deserving of consideration, especially in view of the approach of the rainy season, and would be glad to be informed of the views of his Grace the Governor in Council on the subject. It was obvious that, in order that the measure proposed may be safely carried out, considerable efficiency in the system of village relief is indispensable. The system has now, it is believed, been organised in most of the distressed districts, but his Excellency the Governor General would wish that no pains or expense should be spared to render it thoroughly efficient, while confining, of course, its action to those only who are not able-bodied and capable of being drafted on to the works. There seems every reason to hope that this end would be materially furthered if the civil officers were enabled by the larger employment of Public Works agency, as suggested in my letter, No. 423, of the 8th instant, to give more of their time and attention to the subject.'

The Famine correspondent of the *Statesman and Friend of India* ended his tour in May, and wrote as follows:—'The upshot of my famine reports is, that the famine is *not* perfectly met over a large part of the drought-stricken area. The principal efforts of district officers are concentrated upon the relief works, which are saving tens of thousands of lives, and materially reducing prospective distress. But there are a hundred deaths a day from starvation pure and simple, among

people who got disorganised during the initiation of the relief measures, and whose case is not perfectly met by the system of gratuitous relief, boundless though that seems. The relief agency, being of necessity all native, is next to useless for the emergency without constant and vigorous European control; and the European officers are so trammelled with the details of their ordinary routine, that they can spare very little time to see that daily village inspection, and the prompt relief of distressed persons, are vigilantly carried out.'

The death returns for the months of April and May are thus summarised:—

Deaths in April, 1877	77,916
Do. „ „ 1876	37,675
Increased deaths	40,241
Deaths in May, 1877	92,355
Do. „ „ 1876	39,557
Increased deaths	52,798.

CHAPTER V.

WAITING FOR THE SOUTH-WEST MONSOON.

A VERY short time sufficed to show the cyclonic rains in the latter part of May to be of comparatively small extent, and beyond providing fodder for cattle, and averting a water famine in some districts, very little had been done towards alleviating the distress. Except a decrease of 15,937 persons on the East Coast Canal in Nellore, there was little difference in the weekly lists. These people were not in Government employ, simply because the storm had submerged the works and no employment was to be had; they had, however, to be supported on gratuitous relief. As the period of distress continued, suffering became greatly intensified. In Bellary especially the long-continued state of scarcity told with terrible effect upon the much-tried people. Official reports of deaths from starvation were received. Forty-three deaths occurred from privation at the Civil Dispensary and relief camps in the town in fourteen days. New districts were brought into the area of distress, and week by week larger numbers came on the hands of Government.

The south-west monsoon is due in Madras early in June. It strikes the western coast of Ceylon about May 24, and proceeds slowly northward, reaching Malabar a few days after. In the first week of June the authorities were buoyed up with the hope that the seasonal rains would fall, eight inches having been reported to have fallen at Trevandrum in Travancore in

eight days from May 28. Reports came soon after of heavy 'plumps' of rain in Bellary, Kurnool, and Cuddapah, but nothing like what was needed. A characteristic of the rain at this time was the partial manner in which it fell. Very heavy showers would fall with a dash from blackened skies over a small area, whilst all around the skies continued as iron. An examination of the meteorological returns furnished to the Press by Mr. N. R. Pogson, C.I.E., Government Astronomer, showed that the solar heat *in vacuo* was ten degrees above the average, and from this circumstance it was inferred that moisture was absorbed, even condensation over a large extent of country was impossible, hence the 'dashes' of rainfall which alone were reported. The Madras Government adopted this conclusion, but expressed it in very popular language when they remarked, 'All hopes of a general good monsoon are futile, and in some districts serious deficiencies must be anticipated. The clouds have been apparently entirely dispersed and hurried away by a strong and parching west wind, which has prevailed for some time, and in some cases the sprouting crops have been reported as withering under its influence.'

Minor causes of suffering had been provided by the cyclone which visited the city of Madras and its neighbourhood in May. Five hundred houses belonging to the poor population, Mahomedan chiefly, were destroyed, and an appeal for help in rebuilding these having been made to Government, his Grace the Governor suggested a charitable subscription, heading the list himself with a donation, and suggesting that the municipality should take up the task. This was the first step in a 'new departure,' which, shortly, was to have important consequences. The cattle, too, suffered very much during the cyclone. They had become

greatly enfeebled for want of proper food and nourishment generally, and when the cold winds blew and the heavy rain fell, they perished like flies in an English winter. They died in herds. In the small district of Chingleput, 11,600 are reported to have succumbed.

The chief subjects of concern to the local Government were the question of food-supply and the prices of food-stuffs. As regards supply, merchants were active, but only moderately so, considering, as they did, that the fall of rain would at once lower prices, and leave them in a precarious situation, with large stores in stock. To June 15 320,000 tons had been imported, and proof was given that the food stocks of the people were gradually exhausted by this vast quantity being consumed without delay, leaving the country stores much in the position of the widow's barrel of meal during the scarcity at Zarepta: the bottom was often scraped, but there was always a replenished store. Having no hopes of a miracle being worked in their favour, the authorities were apprehensive that a time would come when there would be no replenishing, and the disaster would of necessity be appalling. Apart from this, a source of disquiet existed in the fact that prices were abnormally high. Famines in India have not hitherto been fought on any uniform plan. In Behar in 1874, when prices had reached 10 seers for a rupee, Government grain was poured into the market: in Madras prices had got down to 6 and 7 seers per rupee, but no intervention was permitted, and bitter complaints were made by those in places of responsibility in consequence. Before the end of July, moreover, the small Government reserves were trenched upon in some directions. Appreciating the gravity of the situation, and feeling their responsibility very

heavily, the Madras Government addressed the supreme authorities, and pointed out that for some weeks there had been a gradual and continuous rise in prices in the districts of the Presidency generally. This rise had left the prices, which were now generally stationary, at very high rates. The collectors' reports, however, showed that, while in April all markets were supplied with raggi, cholum, or cumboo, as well as rice, at the end of May, in Tanjore, no cholum, raggi, or no cholum or cumboo in two others were obtainable, while rice was 7·5 seers to the rupee in three markets. In Trichinopoly out of five markets no grain, except rice, was obtainable, and rice was 6·5 seers the rupee in Udyapollum. In Coimbatore, rice was 4·9 seers the rupee in Collegal taluk and raggi 6·9, while prices were high generally in Pollachi taluk. In Salem, prices at Tripatore were, rice 6·42 seers the rupee, raggi 8·12, and cumboo 7·44, while in Salem itself rice was 7·68. In Bellary, though prices were stationary, in Kudlighi and Hurpanhully rice was 5·25 seers the rupee, and 5·5 in Hadgully, while cholum was 6 to 6½ seers the rupee. In South Arcot, of eight markets cholum was not quoted in four, nor cumboo in two. In Chingleput, of six markets, cholum and cumboo were not quoted in each of five markets. In South Canara cholum and cumboo were not quoted. In Tinnevelly cholum and cumboo were not quoted in four and three markets out of five. In Malabar cholum and cumboo were not quoted at all. In Madura cholum was not quoted in one out of six markets. In Kistna, out of four markets cumboo was not quoted in two. On the Nilgiris, of four markets cholum was not quoted in one, cumboo in two. In Godavery, of six markets cumboo was not quoted in four. In Kurnool the price at Ramalcottah was quoted for rice at 6·0, while cholum was 7·1, and

no other grain was quoted. 'It thus appears,' said the Government, 'that throughout the greater portion of this Presidency prices are at a point which causes a most severe pressure and continually increasing distress.' There were doubtless yet considerable stocks in the Presidency, although it was found impossible to obtain certain and trustworthy information; and these a favourable south-west monsoon might cause to be brought forward, but that these stocks must have been seriously diminished was apparent from the facts that, while the consumption of the population at 1 lb. per head per diem would equal about 3,849,300 tons, the total import of food grain to the Presidency from August to April had been only 417,839, as shown by a statement prepared by the Board of Revenue. The increasing demand on the stock at Bellary for Mysore territory was also noticeable, the export of grain from Bellary being as shown below:—

	To Mysore	To Hyderabad	Total
From March 3 to 31	285·8	911·6	1,197·2
During April	660·0	1,604·2	2,264·2
Up to May 26	822·1	1,649·9	2,472·0

'The stock available at the ports for inland transport was ascertained at the end of May:—

	Tons
Madras	35,000
On sea	10,000
Negapatam	8,000
Beypore Station	1,000
	44,000

It was then remarked, 'This stock will be entirely removed up-country in the usual course of traffic by the end of the current month, and Government are not aware of any considerable further quantity being on its way or ordered, and there is no accumulation at the

up-country railway stations. While it is very probable that the price grain has now reached may induce increased importations, yet the Governor in Council deems it his duty to point out that while he is under no apprehension as to the means of the railways to carry the daily supplies, yet if the railway power is not made use of with regularity, there will be very serious ground for apprehension, because the number of trains that can be run is limited by the circumstances of the line and the locomotive power and waggon stock available. If any material diminution of the grain traffic inland occurs for a fortnight, it will probably be found in practice impossible to carry up the quantity which will be thus deficient in addition to the ordinary daily demands.' Finally, it was remarked, 'The present state of trade causes this Government much anxiety; the pressure of the existing high prices is rapidly adding to the numbers whose sole dependence must be State aid, not only in those districts which have been noticed as distressed, but even in others, but it has, moreover, reduced to abject poverty very many of those who should and would have maintained themselves throughout, had prices similar to those which generally prevailed in the famine districts of Bengal in 1874 prevailed in this Presidency.'

The reply of the Government of India caused a good deal of dissatisfaction in Madras, more, perhaps, than to the dispassionate reader may appear justifiable, if the facts stated in the previous chapter are not borne in mind. Added to those was an increasing feeling that the terrible suffering in Madras was being ignored, and it was noted as a significant symptom that no reports either to or from the Secretary of State were at that time published in the *Gazette of India*. The state of feeling was electrical, and the letter of the Hon. T. C.

Hope, C.S.I., in reply to that from the Madras Government, caused a severe shock, and here and there slight explosions. The communication from Madras dated June 12 was followed by a telegram on the 27th, which was as follows: 'Prices still continue high notwithstanding the rain; rice risen in Vizagapatam, Kurnool, Bellary, Chingleput, and South Arcot. Dry grains risen in Vizagapatam, Godavery, Kistna, Kurnool, Bellary, North Arcot, Chingleput, South Arcot, Salem, Madura, Tinnevelly, and Malabar. Stocks entirely exhausted in Nilgiris district and in some taluks of Salem and Bellary. Increased prices at Kurnool reported, attributable to decrease of stocks and difficulty of carriage.'

The letter of the 12th had been lying nearly ten days at Simla unacknowledged and unanswered. The telegram directed attention to the former communication, and a reply was sent on June 29. It was pointed out that the figures did not exhibit much difference after all. 'From a table given,' it would seem, said Mr. Hope, 'that in Kistna, Nellore, Salem, and Tinnevelly, prices were on June 5 pretty much the same as they were at the end of March; that in North Arcot, Trichinopoly, and Madura, there has been a considerable rise, but only in comparison with a previous lower average; that in Chingleput, Kurnool, and Cuddapah the rise had been about half-a-seer, and in Bellary and Coimbatore about a seer.' It was admitted that since June 25 the general upward tendency of prices had continued, and 'the telegraphic reports of prices on June 19, which appeared in the *Gazette of India* on the 23rd instant, show that, except in Bellary, a man can still everywhere procure for one anna more than the 1 lb. ration, which in Bombay at least has been found sufficient for maintaining health; that except in

Bellary and North Arcot one anna and three pies suffice to procure within about two ounces of what authorities in Madras have admitted to be sufficient, while in seven districts that sum will procure more than 1½ lbs.' This was satisfactory so far as it went, and so far as it referred to Government relief, but that was not the whole of what the Government of Madras alluded to. Further, it was distinctly stated that some of the prices quoted were nominal only, for there was no grain in the market to be purchased. The chief consideration in the minds of the Madras authorities was the condition of the people who were *not* on relief works, *not* in the receipt of money doles. Prices were nearly three times their normal rate, and were pressing cruelly upon respectable poor people in receipt of monthly wages, such as house servants, artisans, and petty clerks. In the best of times their wages barely sufficed to make both ends meet. The major portion of what they earned in good times was required for rice or the particular dry grain which formed their staple food. When that was three times its ordinary rate great suffering was necessarily the consequence, and people had to restrict themselves and their children to one meal a day, and that only scantily furnished.[1] It was hoped that if imports were greater, that if there had been a larger reserve, the price of food could be cheapened to the people of Madras as it had been to the people of Bengal three years previous. All this, however, was ignored by the Famine Department at Simla.

Mr. Hope proceeded: 'With reference to the supply of food grains, I am to remark, that although the returns published weekly in the *Gazette of India* show a cer-

[1] A missionary of the Church Missionary Society, situated in one of the northern districts, described the children in one of his schools as fainting repeatedly during hours of tuition, entirely for want of nourishment. They belonged to 'respectable' classes.

tain falling off in the imports into the Madras Presidency by sea, the last three weeks have witnessed a very decided improvement in the shipments of rice from both Calcutta and Burmah. Under these circumstances his Excellency the Governor General in Council is of opinion that the rise of prices which has occurred is not excessive, and considers it, on the whole, a fortunate circumstance that the rates are keeping up for the present, and thus holding out fair inducements for the continued importation of food by private trade. It is, indeed, not improbable that this rise may lead to some increase in the numbers on the works and in receipt of gratuitous relief, and so may augment the drain on the public treasury, but this his Excellency in Council believes to be a far lesser evil than that which would result from any reversion to the plan of purchasing supplies of grain on behalf of Government, a plan likely to be more costly and less efficient than that of leaving the present high prices to attract importation. This general principle is, of course, subject to the modification which was referred to in paragraph 9 of the instructions to Sir R. Temple of January 16 last, in the case of remote localities where private trade may be inactive. In such cases the best course would appear to be for the Government to advertise for supplies to be delivered at the nearest spots to which there are facilities for importation, and to give the relief to those who need it in the shape of food. It is obviously most desirable that the measures here referred to should be adopted only on the most clear and urgent grounds, and that if resorted to it should be carried out with the utmost practicable publicity. In conclusion, I am to state that with the view of informing the trade of the present condition of supplies, and the continuance of the policy of non-interference hitherto observed, this

correspondence will be made public with the least practicable delay.'

To this there was no rejoinder by the Madras Government. The Secretary of State, however, was informed that a reply had been received, and his Lordship was also told that matters were in a worse condition than on June 12. 'Prices have continued to rise,' said the Madras Council in their weekly despatch, 'while there has been no material increase in imports. Prices have, indeed, now reached a limit in six districts, containing $7\frac{3}{4}$ millions of people, which places wholesome food beyond the reach of a large proportion of the population.'

This state of things compelled the Government to contemplate a phase of the famine of unexampled severity, whilst the holding off of the monsoon, and the consequent failure of crops, led to the opinion that the famine might be still greatly prolonged. July 1 came, and no rain of any consequence had fallen. 'There has been no improvement in the prospect of the season during the week under report,' is the melancholy report sent to London; 'any change that has occurred is for the worse, and, although rain may still fall, we are discussing our arrangements for contending with a prolonged period of distress.' The week after, July 25, all hope of the south-west monsoon was given up, and the position of affairs, from the point of view of the Government, was thus described:—

'The slight and partial showers which have been reported to have fallen in some of the districts of the Presidency have had no effect in improving the condition of affairs. Even in Malabar and South Canara the district average fall, during the week under report, was only 2·29 and 3·8 inches respectively, which, in the former district, is reported to be insufficient for agricul-

ture. We fear that the general failure of the south-west monsoon must now be accepted as an established fact. From all quarters we hear the same story of withering or withered crops, and of the prospects of the dry-grain harvest being very bad. The prices of food grains continue to rise, and have now attained a height which causes very grave anxiety, when we consider the extremely reduced condition to which past months of privation have brought the population of the country, and the wide-spread destitution which prevails, not only in this Presidency, but also in the adjacent territories of Mysore and Hyderabad. The numbers on relief works and gratuitously relieved continue to increase rapidly, the excess in the numbers now reported over those reported last week being about 130,000. This is entirely due to the greater pressure of the famine, and to the increased prices. The sufficiency of the food supply has been and is the subject of our anxious consideration. The Chamber of Commerce estimated that on the 1st inst. the supply of grain remaining in Madras town was only a little over 1,400 tons, a quantity not more than sufficient for about one week's demand for the district dependent on this port for their supplies. Since that date importation has been brisk, and the further consignments which we hear of from Burmah and Calcutta will probably ensure the needful supply of the port to the end of August. We are also informed that there are considerable quantities of grain in districts of Bombay and in the Central Provinces; but the high range of prices in Bombay and the Deccan, and their steady increase in Calcutta, render the further provision for this Presidency somewhat precarious. The supplies from the north by rail have averaged, of late, 800 tons daily; and, notwithstanding the monsoon, we have been aided by consider-

able imports of grain at Narakal, near Cochin. We are in communication with the Government of India respecting the immediate supply of some metre-gauge wagons for the South India Railway; and in consequence more especially of an increase in the demands of the Mysore Province, we are also arranging for the hire (on such terms as the Government of India may decide) of additional engines for the Madras Railway Company. We have every prospect of opening the double line to Arconum for traffic in the course of next week, and we shall continue to give our best attention to promoting the distribution of food supplies by all means that we can devise. In consequence of the absolute failure of market supplies in some places, several of our officers have reported the necessity of having had recourse to the small Government reserve for relief purpose, and, in one instance, temporarily for restricted sales. We are arranging for the employment of large numbers of distressed people, if necessary, on that portion of the Kistna Delta scheme, not yet carried out, which, it is supposed, will provide usefully for 50,000 men, for a time amply sufficient to outlast the famine. There are also some considerable irrigation improvements in Chingleput and North Arcot, and also extensive works in the central delta of the Godavery, which, with the completion of the Coast Canal system, already well advanced, will afford profitable employment for large numbers. For those unable to work we are making arrangements by which they are enabled to receive maintenance in their own homes, under a system of village relief.'

In the opinion expressed with so much weight and gravity the general public concurred. For a short time hopes had been cherished that events would have turned out otherwise. The distress had lingered long

upon the scene, and was becoming wearisome; rain had fallen in May, and it was hastily assumed that the people could go on cultivating, and the distress would cease. Colonel Drever and his assistants did their work in the chief city so well that much suffering was not seen in the streets. 'Out of sight' became 'out of mind' until the end of June, when it was generally realised that distress was becoming greater. This was seen in the large numbers weekly coming on Government relief, literally by hundreds of thousands, but it was brought home to the minds of employers of labour in the representations made to them by their servants, who showed that it was impossible for them to live upon their wages with prices so high. In nearly every house of business, what was known as 'famine batta' ('allowance') was granted, and continued for many months. The Governor, whose activity and efforts were beyond all praise, paid a visit to Trichinopoly, to devise plans for aiding the traffic *viâ* the ports in the south. It was inevitable, under the circumstances which then existed, that there should be a vast increase in the number of people on village relief, consisting mainly of those incapable of work, formerly otherwise provided for, but now thrown on the hands of the Government. If a comparatively rich country like England were without a poor law, and the one-seventh, or whatever may be the proportion, of parish relieved paupers, were usually assisted by private charity, and supposing the price of bread to be more than doubled, could private charity continue to support the increased pressure with diminished means? This was one phase of the difficulty. The cry at that particular time was loud and keen from the poorer class in Great Britain, because the Russo-Turkish war had increased the price of bread 25 per cent.; here it was

nearly 200 per cent. increase, whilst there was no work for those needing work. If the supervision of relief works by the Revenue Department were a mental and physical strain, so as to get the best value of work for the money spent, the strain at this juncture was increased, for a poor-house relief, on an enormous scale, had now to be supervised. The individual expenditure to support human life gratuitously is not very much less than when given as wages. Work could be gauged when done; gratuitous relief must be supervised whilst given. To provide adequate relief, and at the same time to prevent abuse, over such enormous areas of country as had to be dealt with, was the task then before the district officers.

The task was not performed satisfactorily. It could not be in such a country as India, and under such circumstances as then existed. Whilst the prospects daily grew worse, nobody really lost heart. One of the Madras papers, in an article published about the end of June, expressed the prevailing feeling in the Presidency. There was anxiety, but not despondency. This ought, in fairness to Madras, to be borne in mind, for the action taken subsequently was held to demonstrate entire and helpless despondency on the part of the Presidency, and all the residents in it. The newspaper referred to said: '"A stout heart to a stiff brae," cheerily said David Livingstone to his companion, Stanley, when, both wasted by fever, they had a peculiarly severe march before them on the mountains of Central Africa. This is precisely what we all in Madras need to say to each other and to ourselves, now that, almost without hope of alleviation, we are entering upon a period of famine with every former circumstance aggravated. If we become over-anxious, through realising too fully what destitution means, we shall

waste force that might be more usefully employed; if we despair and lose our heads by reason of the evil that is pressing upon us, as the iron cage of history did upon its prisoner-victim till life was crushed from his body, the great evil and distress will become by so much greater. We are nearing the end of July, and there is no prospect now of the south-west monsoon saving the crops which were sown when rains did fall, but which are now withering in the ear. Hopefulness remains with us, and we have the north-west rains to look forward to, the pucka rains for us when they do come. Meanwhile, let the expense be what it may, the people must be kept alive as far as possible.'

There were loud and earnest cries for the Viceroy to visit Madras, and many anxious eyes were cast towards the Indian Olympus, but no sign of assistance from the gods was vouchsafed. During the whole of the month of July, the most anxious and critical time of the crisis, only two or three communications seem to have passed between Simla and Madras, little notice was taken of the terrible increase in numbers on gratuitous relief, no recognition was vouchsafed of the weekly expressed anxiety of the local Government about the monsoon, no notice was taken of the desire expressed in the Madras journals for the Viceroy to proceed to the scene of action. Only at the end of the month, on receipt of an alarming telegram from Madras, was action taken. This telegram was as follows:—

'Madras Government deem it their duty to report that the condition of distressed districts of this Presidency is now very critical. If good rain falls within ten days some dry crops on the ground may be saved, but even then the harvest must be an indifferent one. If no rain falls before end of the month the dry crops, other than those which may be irrigable from tanks or

wells, will completely fail, and result will be most disastrous. Local stocks of grain appear to be failing in many places, and entirely exhausted in some. Actual inability to purchase any in several parts of the country has been reported. Prices higher than they have yet been and still rising, causing largely increased numbers to fall on State aid, notwithstanding careful scrutiny. Greatly increased expenditure will be inevitable. Government are making arrangements on assumption that the monsoon proves a failure.'

Mr. Hope replied, the day after: 'The Government of India are much concerned at the disastrous state of things with which the Madras Government have to deal, as intimated in your telegram of the 23rd inst. Has the suggestion made in the fifth paragraph of my letter of June 29 been acted on? The Governor General in Council would be glad to know what are the arrangements referred to at the close of your telegram.'

The rejoinder of the Madras Government was in these terms: 'I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 25th inst., and in reply to state that the suggestion made in the fifth paragraph of your letter of June 29, No. 557, has been acted on in two districts, viz., Madura and the Nilgiris, and will be further acted on in some others; but the Madras Government desire to avoid making calls which may affect prices in districts and in local markets where they consider such a course can be safely delayed. With respect to the arrangements alluded to in my telegram of the 23rd, No. 454, regarding which his Excellency the Governor General in Council requests information, I am to state that they consist of the organisation for the employment of labour in completing and improving the irrigation in the Kistna and Godavery deltas, and the Palar Anicut channel system,

in improvements to the navigation of the Pulicat Lake, and the construction of various river embankments, and of a modification of the system of village relief, and securing a supply of food to those on relief in their villages.'

The Madras authorities needed support: their hands wanted strengthening. The crisis was palpably great, almost beyond their control, though no men could have worked harder or with more anxious hearts than did the Governor and his Council, and the whole hierarchy of officials. A rumour became current that Lord Lytton would visit Madras in November, and men curled their lips in scorn when they heard it. Some were certain that if Lord Lytton saw things for himself, a great change in the treatment of affairs would result. The most melancholy part of the outlook was found in the cry which came alike from all the distressed districts, that the stocks of food were exhausted. This, too, though the railway had been working 'double tides' for months, and had, all things considered, been doing wonders. But the material for conveyance purposes was defective. At first engines were few and insufficient; when that want was supplied, waggons were lacking, and the other railways were so hard pressed as to be able to spare very few on loan. What ought to have been done at the outset, six months previously, was to have ordered a large quantity of rolling stock from England. This, however, was not done, and the consequences were deplorable.

'We may form some idea,' said a Madras journalist, 'of the good it would do Lord Lytton and some members of his Council, Mr. T. C. Hope especially, if they were to visit Madras, from the leading article of the *Times of India* of two days ago. The editor of the Bombay journal alluded to was in Madras last week,

and whilst here made enquiries for himself as to the existing state of things, with the result that a most melancholy picture has been drawn of the state of affairs, the tints being of a darker hue even than we ourselves are accustomed to use.'

An interesting indication of the depth of the distress was exhibited at this period in a letter addressed to the newspapers by Mr. G. L. Hynes, mint master at Bombay. He says: 'Through the pressure of the present famine, the silver ornaments and melted country silver discs are pouring in at the rate of nine lakhs of rupees worth per mensem. The meaning of this will be shown more clearly by a few figures. In the exceptional years 1873–4, the value of rupees in this kind of silver received was as follows :—

2,62,890	ornaments
9,19.524	country melted silver
1,182,414	rupees

The first part of 1874–5, the official year beginning in April, was also marked by the receipt of a large amount of ornaments and silver, mainly received before the rains set in, and in the severity of the famine actually diminished :—

56,501	ornaments
35,880	melted country silver
92,381	rupees.

The year 1875–6 may be taken as a normal year :—

61,735	ornaments
15,096	melted country silver
76,831	rupees

Or we may arrive at a fair average in another way. The first ten months from January to October of the calendar year 1876 amounted to 57,900 rs., which gives an average monthly receipt of 5,790 rs., and agrees fairly with the average monthly receipts of the previous year.'

Details are as follows :—

			Rs.
1876.	April.	Country silver, and silver ornaments estimated at	10,995
„	May	„ „ „	1,161
„	June	„ „ „	7,896
„	July	„ „ „	„
„	August	„ „ „	1,825
„	September	„ „ „	„
„	October	„ „ „	3,855
„	November	„ „ „	69,609
„	December	„ „ „	104,232
1877.	January	„ „ „	129,836
„	February	„ „ „	205,542
„	March	„ „ „	306,848
		Total during the last official year . rs.	841,799
1877.	April	„ „ „	608,740
„	May	„ „ „	837,034
„	June	„ „ „	1,151,515
„	July	„ „ „	1,533,212
		Total for current year up to date . rs.	4,130,501

The reports from the districts were mainly of the tenor of that forwarded by Major C. D. Baynes, in charge of relief works, Darampuri. 'For the last fortnight,' wrote Major Baynes, 'copious showers have fallen over the whole of the taluk, especially during the last week: the ground is saturated to the depth of 15 and 18 inches, and nearly every tank has had a month's supply of water, and the weather at present has assumed quite the appearance of that prevalent during the monsoon. But this opportunity for shortening the duration of the present distress by the sowing of rape and cumboo crops has been almost wasted, as not one-third of available land is under crop or even prepared for the reception of seed. In every village I visit I find the ryots in a condition of idle despair, because they have neither cattle, nor seed, nor fodder; they generally state they cannot even borrow money to purchase bullocks, as their lands have passed out of their possession, having been sold outright or mortgaged beyond redemption: to provide

their immediate want, they certainly have neither cattle nor means of supporting the number of bullocks required for agricultural purposes, seeing that the thatch from most of the houses has already been consumed in the maintenance of the few cattle that are yet in existence. Consequently this weather, so favourable for agricultural operations, has had no effect in diminishing the number of small landholders who have hitherto been supporting themselves by labour on relief works, nor in averting future distress.'

Mr. Wedderburn, collector of Coimbatore, wrote:—'Some villagers have sold their brass vessels, their ornaments (even including their wives' "talis"), their field implements, the thatch of the roofs, the frames of their doors and windows, and others are approaching similar destitution. Some of the Vellala puttahdars are overcoming their repugnance to accepting food at our relief houses, and unless rain falls very soon, we must expect a great increase of the numbers already on gratuitous relief. If no rain falls in the month of August, it is to be feared that the ryots will not be able to keep alive their ploughing bullocks. Many people are now migrating to Pollachi and Malabar district until better times.'

Mr. Price, of Cuddapah, thus describes the situation in his district:—'It is with the greatest reluctance, and after waiting until what I consider to be the last safe moment, that I have the honour to apply to Government for assistance, in order to meet the rapidly increasing distress. I have, in previous reports, both official and demi-official, stated my opinion that a failure of the south-west monsoon would entail the most serious consequences, and have observed that in this case Government must be prepared to meet a very heavy outlay. I and those under me have worked on in the hope that

rain would come and all would be well. I now see but little chance of its falling, except by a special dispensation of Providence. Day after day clouds come up only to disappear with the sunset; the crops are beginning to wither and the grass to dry up. Village relief is assuming gigantic proportions, and prices are steadily and surely rising. Rain may come, but from the accounts from Bombay and the West Coast which I see in the newspapers, there is but very little chance of its making its appearance. A fortnight more of the present weather will certainly end in the destruction of nearly the whole of the dry crops of the district. It is not necessary for me to say what the effect of this will be.

'Of the staff which was at my disposal a month ago, Messrs. Weekes and Bradbury are permanently *hors de combat*, and Mr. MacCartie, much to my regret, is temporarily so. Mr. ——, who was utterly incompetent, has resigned, and Mr. —— is under suspension, and must eventually be dismissed. I have just received the news of the death, from cholera, of one of the best of my hospital assistants Major —— is next to useless, and either cannot or will not work. I am also not receiving that ready help from the district engineer that Government expect or I should wish. My sub-collector is new to famine work, and has his attention amply engaged in bringing into order the disorder created by his predecessor. This is the state of affairs in the district, and there is before us the prospect of having to encounter a calamity compared with which all that has gone before will be as nothing. I write in no sensational mood and state nothing but facts, the correctness of which can be ascertained by enquiries from those serving under me or the deputation of any special officer. I have done everything in my power to alleviate and meet the distress, and to, at the same time, save the

State money, and I have been nobly seconded by several of my subordinates. I have watched matters coolly, and, I believe, carefully, and I have accepted no officer's judgment until I felt satisfied that it was correct. I have come to the conclusion that without more help in the way of Europeans, and those officers of Government, the increasing famine cannot be successfully met, and that a disastrous loss of life must be the inevitable result. I therefore most earnestly beg that Government will be pleased to let me have this assistance at once. I have hitherto pulled on as well as I could without it, but this cannot be any longer done. My experience of natives is that, superintended by Europeans, if gentlemen, they work fairly, but that where left without this check, they either overdo or very much underdo relief.'

One report at least was of a more cheering nature, and the great alleviation to which Mr. Master refers in the following sentence reveals one of the means whereby famine may be successfully met; it was due to the wise foresight of Mr. Wedderburn, during the famine of 1866, in Bellary, that well-cultivation was freed from onerous restrictions, and widely extended. The Board of Revenue submitted a report for the information of Government, in which they said:—'Mr. Master's tour has shown that the southern taluks of Bellary are in a far better condition than was supposed. The great extent of well-cultivation has mitigated distress, but the report does not furnish explanation why the numbers on relief works in the taluk of Madaksira should have so far exceeded those in the neighbouring taluks. Recent reports, however, show considerable reduction in that taluk.'

The work of relief had its dark side in July, as it had in February. How relief was mismanaged in a northern district has been shown: the manner in which

the people could be ungrateful for all that was done in their behalf is indicated in the following letter written by a gentleman who visited the camp at Salem. He wrote :—

'Salem, July 14.

'I went to see the relief camp this morning. It is situated a little beyond the fourth milestone on the Madras road, near a spur of the Shevaroys, called the Chalk-Hills. The rows of sheds which form the sleeping apartments of the recipients of relief are easily seen as we approach the spot, about a furlong off the main road. The ground selected for the camp is flat, consequently the lines of sheds may be extended in almost every direction, according to the necessities of the case, without interfering with the symmetry of the encampment. I did not count the sheds already erected, nor the skeletons of others in course of erection, but there must have been about three rows containing about ten sheds each, and each shed capable of holding about a hundred persons. Four sheds of the same character, situated at a little distance from the rest, were used as hospitals. Three huge pens in different parts of the camp were used as *al fresco* dining rooms, where the people sat in rows and received their dole. Latrines were erected at a safe distance, but it will not take a visitor long to discover that the people considered such a provision utterly unnecessary, and took a practical way of showing their opinion. The sheds were built almost entirely of palmyra leaves; the supporting posts and the sticks on which the thatch was tied were the only exceptions to this rule. The roof was about 10 feet high, and reached to within 3 feet of the ground at the sides. The sides of the sheds consisted also of leaves. The doorways were small (poky would be the better word), and showed how carefully the native idea

of a doorway had been carried out. Lord Lytton should be much pleased with this mark of consideration for native feelings. To me, the sheds seemed too much shut up, and to have far too little ventilation (another concession to the native).

'The sight is very picturesque. On all sides, hills more or less near are to be seen, and the unique low line of chalk, running away at a rather sharp angle from the other hills, was pleasing by contrast. I arrived just at the time of the morning meal. One pen-full were just finishing their portion and breaking up into irregular groups, and another party were "just going to begin." I saw the food, but did not taste it. I have had to do with providing food for natives in my time, and I am prepared to say that, though I have seen a larger quantity of food disposed of at a meal, yet the amount given to the poor people was not meagre, and if (as I believe) they get as much twice a day, they will certainly not die of starvation, provided their internal organs of assimilation are in sound working order to begin with. I entered the kitchen and saw the huge pans full of ghee, &c., and the operation of cooking going on. Certainly the cooks are not starving.

'I was told that I had come at an inopportune time, for the people were just then utterly unmanageable. I had heard of the insurrection at Bellary,[1] and from my own experience could quite understand that nearly 4,000 desperately hungry people might become obstreperous. There was nothing like mutiny, however. The people were simply unruly and disorderly; they would not retain their places in the ranks waiting for their food, but persisted, in a truly native manner, in rushing hither and thither wherever they thought they would earliest be served. Order and discipline were utterly demoralised for the time being. The fact is the

[1] A small outbreak of slight importance.

camp is far too big. If still retained as one there should be divisions under different responsible heads; and the arrangements for cooking &c. should be quite distinct in each division. The camp is growing enormously fast, and it is simply impossible, in my opinion, that so huge an encampment can be methodically and systematically governed and fed from a single centre. The camp has a capital resident superintendent, but he seems to have no lieutenants of divisions on whom he can rely in their respective spheres. The Government has not hitherto been to blame for this, for the rapid growth of the famine has laid far too heavy burdens on far too few officers in this district, and consequently something must be overlooked and inadequately provided for. The camp has now grown so large that it must have a sufficient and competent establishment of its own.

'The present site has been condemned by Dr. Macdonald, and arrangements are already in progress, I hear, for removing the camp about a mile farther from Salem on the same road. The soil at the present camp is very porous, and the existence of so many people there for so many months has sown the soil with the seeds of disease which may spring forth to a deadly harvest at any time.

'I say nothing of the condition of the people I saw there; I saw nothing new. The same class of emaciated, and (in many cases) moribund paupers may be seen on any day in any part of the district. I dare say you can see them yourself in Madras. But I was very much struck with the grumbling, fault-finding, quarrelsome spirit of the people. Some were quiet enough; they evidently had not the strength to grumble or fight. But others, hundreds of them, swarmed round the visitors and complained of almost every possible thing. The quantity was not enough, the rice was not good enough,

the addition to the rice (a kind of fish or mutton mulligatawny) was not tasty enough, the meals were not early enough or punctual enough; in fact, an Englishman could not have grumbled more. Quarrels, too, were going on, though I could not find out the cause, indeed, I did not try to find out. One poor, lean, gaunt old woman had her very scanty cloth torn very nearly off her by a virago a little less lean than herself, and a third stepped in and impartially struck both. In the two hours I spent there I grew quite disgusted with the utter shamelessness and ingratitude of the great mass of the recipients of the relief; and if a casual visitor feels thus, what must the resident superintendent and the Government officials feel who see this same thing every day? I am not of those who say that natives can't feel gratitude and have no word in their language to express gratitude, for I am well aware of the falsity of both statements; but I must candidly say that those who labour for these poor wretches in the relief camps get far more complaints and abuse than civility and gratitude from those whom they thus carefully tend.

'The camp is placed in the charge of Mr. Tate, the civilian from Bengal who was sent to render special assistance during the famine, having had experience of this work in the Bengal famine. He visited the camp daily, and, as above mentioned, there is also a resident European superintendent. I have come away with the impression that the workers in connection with the camp, from the collector downwards, are doing nobly all they can to alleviate misery and save life in spite of the discouraging ingratitude and complaints of those who are benefited by the relief.

'The camp contains about 3,700 people, of whom 200 are in hospital, suffering principally from diarrhœa and dysentery. Cholera has appeared within the last

few days, and threatens to become epidemic if the camp be not speedily shifted. When shifted, it should be divided into two or more parts, with separate domestic arrangements and supervision. If I remember rightly, this is intended to be done in the new camp.'

A few days later the same gentleman wrote :—

'July 18, 1877.

'The famine is the uppermost topic at present, and, unfortunately, likely to be so for a long time to come. I see that expressions of commiseration are very frequent in the papers, because rice is only five or six measures the rupee in various places. I suppose your correspondents are of opinion that the prices mentioned are indeed high; but how thankful the people of Salem would be to get rice so cheap. Here, the price is a rupee for three measures, and for a few days about a week ago only two and a-half measures were given for a rupee! I have reason to believe that the famine is felt here at present more severely than in other parts of South India. Not only is rice at a prohibitive price, but all other articles of food are dear in proportion. Even cows, that fell so rapidly in price on account of failure of pasturage, are now rising again because they are so scarce—so many having died of starvation. The condition of the poor of Salem is melancholy in the extreme. The streets are thronged with living skeletons that, alas! will soon cease to be living, and the suburbs are too painfully sprinkled with recumbent emaciated frames covered with cloths, suggestive of laid-out corpses, although the majority of these are not yet dead. The police are indefatigable in picking up these stray waifs of dying humanity and taking them off to the relief camps ; but even the police cannot be everywhere and prevent all the sad sights that meet one's eyes. Some months ago I thought I had seen the

nearest possible approach to a living bag of bones, but I must confess that I have since then seen worse specimens of the human species. While some appear exhausted and dying, though not so (apparently) severely reduced, others have vitality enough to walk about with a measure of activity, though they remind one of nothing so much as a piece of brown parchment, tightly stretched over a skeleton. If anyone wishes to see famine-stricken creatures in their last gasp, let him go to the camp, or if that is too far, to the various cutcheries in Salem, to the compound of the Roman Catholic Chapel at Surapet, or, indeed, almost anywhere in the town and neighbourhood. To look at them is like looking at the forlorn hope before an assault, for there is absolute certainty that most of them will soon be in their graves. (The great increase in the number of vultures lately is sadly noteworthy). A conjee house in Salem, and several centres of out-door relief fail to meet all the exigencies of the time; and, indeed, one cannot help pitying the soft-hearted among those employed in relief work, because they see so much more real misery than they are able to alleviate. On the other hand, very distressing is the condition of those poor people who fail to get the aid that others, no worse off than themselves, are lucky enough to secure. I am convinced, however, that many (perhaps most) of those who wander about starving and dying prefer to live and die in this way, rather than put themselves under the very slight restrictions of relief camps. Those who are taken there in an unconscious state no sooner recover health than they take their departure. A policeman remarked to me, "Those we send to-day are back again to-morrow."

'The effect of the famine on the public health is of course felt. Fevers, diseases of the bowels, small-pox, are prevalent, and cholera also exists, though not to any great extent.

'The prospects of the coming harvest are very poor, at least in the neighbourhood of Salem itself. Not half the fields are cultivated, and of the other half scarcely any will have an average crop. The crops are standing in ear, waiting for rain to fill out the grain, but will wither apparently for want of water. Already the immature stalks are being gathered for fodder. One thing is certain; the present crops will add nothing to the grain stocks now in hand, and will not even suffice for the current demands between this and next harvest. If the demands on the present stores be abated for a time, that is all that can be expected.

'That under these circumstances the number of relief recipients at the camps has doubled within a short time, and now amounts to nearly 4,000, is a powerful indicator of the increased pressure of the famine.

'The famine is having a very great influence also on crime. The central jail here has nearly 1,800 prisoners (which is more than double the normal number), and additions are made daily. As many as forty new inmates turn up on some days. It is well known that many persons deliberately commit crimes in order to have a prolonged board at the expense of the Government. It becomes a serious item in the famine expenditure when lengthened periods of imprisonment have to be provided for some hundreds of convicts—an item, too, that will not cease with the famine itself.

'Education, too, is suffering, as many lads are dismissed from the various schools because they are unable to pay the necessary fees. Indeed, it is difficult to see what is not affected injuriously by the famine.

'For a long time no rain has fallen, and the country is beginning to be scorched up again, and wells are dried up. A refreshing shower fell here two days ago, but beyond the passing alleviation of heat no good can be

done by so slight a fall. The thermometer stands as high now at midday as it did in the hot weather of April and May, but falls lower at night, varying from 80° to 98° in the twenty-four hours.

'While writing this letter I have heard vague rumours of a loot in yesterday's market; but I don't quite believe it. At any rate, I hope the report is not true.

'I forgot to mention in the proper place that we are indebted to the railway for the high price of rice here. Some thousands of bags are lying at Beypore waiting for transmission to Salem and other places on the line. But for some days no rice whatever was brought, and then the price rose to two and a-half measures per rupee. A little is now coming, and this has lowered the price to three measures; and if plenty comes (and there seems plenty ready to come), the price will fall still more. It seems very sad that the deficiency of rolling stock should affect human life so seriously, but so it is.'

In June the directors of the Monegar Choultry at Madras (a poor-house and infirmary, probably the nearest approach to an English workhouse in India) were requested by one of their number, Mr. Krishnama Charriar, to provide for the relief of the caste poor of Madras who could not, from religious and other scruples, partake of cooked food supplied in relief houses. They would rather die than partake of such food. As the funds of the Choultry (raised from endowments made by wealthy natives, from public subscriptions, and from a grant from Government) would not permit of aid being rendered from them in the way suggested, even if they had been large enough for the purpose, which they were not, the proposal was referred to his Grace the Governor in Council. The Governor in Council suggested that the relief of such poor as were

altogether outside of existing agencies should be undertaken by the public, who should raise subscriptions towards which Government would make allotments. The municipal council was made the medium of this effort, as it had been of a previous charitable undertaking, and a large number of European and native gentlemen joined in the deliberations of the Famine Relief Committee which was then formed. At one of the meetings, sub-committees (9) aggregating nearly two hundred gentlemen, undertook the personal supervision of relief, and agreed to make a searching investigation into the cases of all who were applicants for food. At this meeting the first suggestion was made for seeking charitable aid outside Madras; it emanated from Mr. Digby, editor of the *Madras Times*. Some discussion followed the suggestion, Sir William Robinson, K.C.S.I., agreeing that it would be well if the attention of the English public were called to the actual state of things in Southern India, but he was not of opinion that the Town Relief Committee should undertake the task. Mr. Digby maintained the propriety of the Madras Committee, as representing the whole Presidency, taking the initiative, but for the time being forbore to move a resolution on the subject.

Having, meanwhile, found there was a strong feeling among the inhabitants of Madras in favour of action being taken, Mr. Digby brought the subject forward at a meeting held on July 30. The proceedings at these meetings will be found in greater detail in the section of this book devoted to Private Charity; at these meetings it was resolved that a requisition should be sent to the Sheriff to convene a meeting, and his Grace the Governor should be asked to preside. At the committee meeting Mr. Digby moved the following resolution, which was substantially adopted:—

'That the Central Committee of Town Relief for Madras arrange for a public meeting being held at an early date in the Banqueting Hall, over which his Grace the Governor be asked to preside. That at this meeting resolutions be submitted which shall show the extent of distress throughout the Presidency, and that the aid of the communities of Calcutta and other Indian cities, where no abnormal distress is being experienced, be sought. Also that the Lord Mayor of London and the English Chambers of Commerce be communicated with, and that the India Office be asked to put all available communications regarding the famine at the service of the English press. As the local Government undertake to keep the people alive as far as possible, it be suggested that the funds raised in England and elsewhere be employed in supplementing Government aid, and in providing implements for agriculture and seed grain for sowing during the approaching north-east monsoon season.'

By this time the Government had fully recognised two things: (1) that the disaster had become aggravated, and increased efforts were absolutely necessary; (2) that the aid of the general public—suffering having reached the lower middle class, who could not comply with conditions as to residence, &c., to enable them to claim relief which they sorely wanted, and agriculturalists and others needing assistance which could not be provided from State funds—must now be sought. As an earnest of the first-mentioned fact, a minute was prepared by his Grace the Governor, dated July 17, which was read in Council on the 24th, adopted, and sent to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. It was in the following terms:—

'It must be assumed for the purpose of famine arrangements that the south-west monsoon has failed.

This prolongs materially the time during which State relief will be needed, and the numbers to be relieved. No material aid will be obtainable from crops sown with the north-east monsoon until end of January.

'*Class I.*—Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah, Chingleput, with parts of North Arcot and Salem, will probably be most distressed.

'*Class II.*—Madura, Coimbatore, and other portions of North Arcot and Salem.

'*Class III.*—Nellore and Kistna.

'*Class IV.*—South Arcot, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Tinnevelly, and Malabar.

'The primary question is (first) the mode of relief to be adopted in works and in villages; and (second) the works available.

'1. As regards the first, I entertain little doubt that the scale of wages laid down by Government Order for task (not less than 50 per cent. of ordinary) is sufficient; that all who cannot earn that are not suited for relief labour, and should not be employed as a rule; that those not employed should, if possible, be relieved in their own villages; that village relief should be such as to tempt residents to remain at home unless able to work profitably; that wanderers should be sent to, and relieved in, close camps, and if able to labour, kept to labour; that the camps should be divided into two distinct portions, one for medical treatment and relief, the other for ordinary relief of such as are entitled to it; that the increased diet recommended by the medical officers should be given only in that portion of the camp devoted to those needing medical treatment; that the diet in the other portion should be so fixed as not to compete with the village relief, which, I think, should not exceed the proportion of two-thirds the wages scale; that the village relief, the camp relief, and the wages scale should be maintained on similar scales throughout.

'2. As regards work for relief, it seems desirable to take all possible measures to keep up the principle of family union and support, and that the larger works shall, with this view, be allowed to be performed at contract rates, so as to enable the adult members to earn a fair subsistence for themselves and children.

'3. That where the daily wage is in force, care should be taken that no adult members of a family whose principal member is on a work, and who need relief, are refused for the same work, even though unable to complete 50 per cent. of an ordinary task; and care should be taken that where there are young children they are produced, and that the parents receive the apportioned allowance, so that the family receive the full benefit of the scale given by the Government.

'4. That in all relief camps where wanderers are received in any number, work shall be provided adjoining, at which the men shall be employed if they remain in the camp, such as digging or storing metal, gravel, &c., unless when the camp labour supplies sufficient employment.

'5. That all persons in camp who are fit to travel should be relegated to their villages, and registered for village relief.

'6. That no foreigner, *i.e.* from Mysore, Hyderabad, or Bombay, should be received on any State relief work; that all such as are in the Presidency and unfit to walk home to the nearest village of their State should be detained in relief camp until an officer, on application, is sent for them, or they are sent under Madras officers to their states.

'7. As regards the second, a careful discussion with Colonel Mullins, chief engineer for irrigation, con- 50,000 men. firms the fact that there are but few larger works which can be undertaken. The principal are:—

'*First.*—The Kistna Delta Works.

'*Second.*—The Coast Canal completion, including branch navigation towards principal places by the creeks; sectioning the banks so far as to give security against the spoil washing back with heavy rain, or pressing on the banks; deepening the southern portion of Pulicat Lake; canalising through the Pulicat Lake; the thorough cleaning and bottoming of the Southern Canal, and its extension to Sadras and into the Palar, with formation of tow-paths through Covelong back-water and where needed, so that when the navigation is opened, it may be really opened through.

20,000 men. Nelloro.

Probably 5,000 men. Chingleput, Ponneri taluk.

Say 3,000 men. Chingleput.

'*Third.*—The improvement and reforming of the Palar ancient channels (not ready probably until the end of August), and the supply channel of the Sholaveram Tank.

4,000 men. North Arcot and Chingleput.

'*Fourth.*—In Cuddapah the Oundakoor Tank Channel, which will improve cultivation, but not pay a profit; this is marked out.

3,000 men.

'*Fifth.*—The suggested embankments of Cortelliar and Narnaveram, which appear of very doubtful utility. The chief engineer for irrigation will not say more than that they are now so laid out as not to do harm. Their effect will be to assist in conducting to sea the floods which, I think, should rather be retained upon the land; and I am averse, therefore, to these works being undertaken, but would prefer that the skill of the engineers should be directed to devising works for those rivers which may retain the water for use, lessening the force of the current, and thus avoiding the scour and washing away of the surface or sand deposit on the land.

2,500 men.

'*Sixth.*—In Kurnool no work of any magnitude can be devised, unless a railway extension from Gooty were

feasible. No survey of this district has ever been made for the purpose, and it is said to be difficult in places.

'8. It is suggested that the Kistna Delta Works be appropriated for Kurnool labour under voluntary contracts; if this can be carried out it should withdraw 150,000 people from the district.

'9. In North Arcot there appear to be no works of any magnitude, except the Palar embankment near Vellore; and the cleansing of the Fort ditch will not only be an important sanitary improvement and advantage to the fort, &c., but will afford a valuable additional reservoir of water, suitable at least for cattle, at a place where it is much needed.

'10. In Trichinopoly and Salem the chief engineer for irrigation considers that ample work can be given in the Cauvery embankment repairs and in tank repairs for some months.

'11. All the works above referred to may be carried out by petty contract in the ordinary way under Public Works Department, except, perhaps, some work connected with bottoming the canal where daily labour may need to be employed.

'12. If the Kistna Delta Works are undertaken, hutting and camp sites should be immediately selected, and the company of sappers from the canal, or another in relief, be transferred to make preparation, set out the works, &c., and if decided to be made available for Kurnool people, the Public Works should put themselves in communication with Kurnool contractors, specifying the rates to be given, and arranging for the march of men and families, while huts, &c., or materials sufficient to resist the north-east monsoon, are prepared, the men being guaranteed provisions for the march and for the return of themselves and families, say in February.

'13. The other works can be readily taken up without much preparation.

'The labourers from the Chingleput Railway who belong to North Arcot should be transferred to their own villages for relief, and the stronger to Vellore for work. The Chingleput labour should be transferred in a similar manner to South Canal and Pulicat.

'14. As regards labour for Madras and its immediate neighbourhood, the junction section of the canal, the cleansing of the mud banks in the Cooum, the powder-mill works, and excavation of filter beds for the water-works, which should be promptly decided on, should afford ample employ.

'15. It is well to note that there are two large works not noticed here, viz. the Bellary High Level Project, and the Sungum Project. The first would cost 1,40,00,000 rs., but could be only carried out during this famine to the extent of 50,00,000 rs; and the portion of work so executed would be of no use, or produce any return until the whole estimate be spent, as it is not a work the completion of partial lengths of which would be of any avail. The Sungum Project would employ a considerable amount of labour, but its return is very problematical, while the works named should employ all the able-bodied labourers on more important and on some minor works.

'16. It is intended by the chief engineer for irrigation to have the Darampury taluk in Salem carefully re-examined to see whether some irrigation tanks might not be there formed.

(Signed) 'BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS.'

The hope with which all were buoyed up at the commencement of the period when this chapter was begun, had now died away, and in great gloom and deep

anxiety the month of July passed away. The death rate in the two months under review was:—

Deaths in June 1877	No.	95,770
„ „ 1876	„	42,031
Increased deaths	„	53,739
Deaths in July 1877	No.	134,433
„ „ 1876	„	48,315
Increased deaths	„	86,118

CHAPTER VI.

THE CULMINATION OF THE CRISIS.

THE following fragment of a conversation between two gentlemen represents opinion in Madras in the beginning of August:—

First Gentleman: Two months hence his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos would be ready to give his coronet and the position he occupies to have a contract carried out which secured him half-a-million tons of grain.

Second Gentleman: I think so, too. The extent and amount of distress, in the interior at least, will be something terrible.

The problem which had to be solved at this period was a very serious one. Briefly stated, it was this: Under normal circumstances, one anna will buy in Southern India more than one lb. of grain; but at this time it would not purchase more than one half of a lb., or even that quantity. Rice in ordinary seasons sells at the rate of ten Madras measures for the rupee. In the last week of July it was quoted at three and four measures (which is as if the quartern loaf in England, instead of being sixpence, was nearly two shillings), whilst the houses of the people had been denuded of all valuables and necessaries, these having been sold to provide food to eat. It was clearly impossible for the people in Madras to cope adequately with the distress. The cost of living was increased to everyone. Those

at the head of large business concerns, as has been already stated, gave a bonus month by month to their employés, whose wages would buy now only a fourth of what they once would. The state of things was now immeasurably worse than in the famine in Bengal. Twenty-three people in all died of starvation in Bengal in 1874: in Madras no camp of three thousand rose morning after morning without leaving thirty of its number upon the ground to rise no more. In the interior the distress was fearful. One gentleman passing down a ghaut in the Wynaad in July counted twenty-nine dead bodies on the road; a coffee planter, seeking shelter from rain in a hut, found six decomposed corpses in it. People died of starvation in the streets of Madras, and such an occurrence had, from its frequency, ceased to alarm. The financial burden borne by Government was becoming a grievous one. In the course of his speech in the House of Commons a month previously, when introducing the Indian Budget, Lord George Hamilton said that the cost of the famine in Bombay and Madras would be 3,300,000*l.*, a statement at which most people in India marvelled greatly. This is how the matter stood in August for Madras alone, the figures being roughly given; but they are approximately correct:—

Amount expended on direct relief to end of July 1877 (about)	£3,000,000
Probable expenditure to January next (may be very much more)	2,500,000
Loss of land revenue next year through non-cultivation (about)	3,000,000
Total for Madras alone	£8,500,000

Then, owing to the deaths of cultivators—*one and a half millions at the very least*—for many years to come the revenue from the land (the great stand-by of the State chest in India) must be very short. It is not possible, even if it were desirable, to adequately describe the scenes of heartrending woe which were to be witnessed

on every side. To those who saw them the events were heartbreaking, because they felt their own powerlessness to make any great impression upon them. One word of tribute must be paid to the law-abiding tendencies of the people generally. In spite of the terrible distress, notwithstanding the claims of their empty bellies, there were remarkably few robberies. Dacoities (gang robberies) increased in a far smaller proportion than might have been anticipated.[1] On the other hand, the ties of nature were ruthlessly severed. On any day and every day mothers might be seen in the streets of Madras offering children for sale, whilst the foundling section of the Monegar Choultry was full of infants found by the police on the roads, deserted by their parents, some with the marks of recent birth upon them.

The problem of feeding the people in the districts, of providing sustenance for many millions, was felt to be almost insoluble. The Government stood *in loco parentis* towards several millions of people, providing them with means of subsistence, and, therefore, were immediately responsible for sustaining them in life. The problem which the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos and his Council had to solve was how to feed an uncertain number of people on imported food for half a year at least. If the rain had come in seasonable time, the crops of dry millets might have been ready in October, when the extreme pressure would have been over, but the rains at the end of July (if universal, which had not proved to be the case) were too late to save more than a mere fraction of the early harvest of

[1] This statement needs some qualification. Since the text of this chapter was penned, the writer has been favoured with particulars of crimes committed, which seem to indicate that, in a larger measure than was generally supposed, crime increased. But, even when the worst is told, the outbreaks were marvellously few considering the prevailing want, and the millions who were in need.

dry grains. The rains would, however, prepare the ground for the later crops due in February. The Government were of opinion that from 3,500 to 4,000 tons of grain per diem would be required during the ensuing six months, and this calculation was based upon about ten millions of people having to subsist on imported food, but for aught that was then known to the contrary, the local stocks might be so denuded that the authorities would have to consider how fifteen or more millions might be fed. The critical state of affairs will be seen when it is stated that the railways connected with the Presidency were not at that time carrying more than 2,500 tons a day, and that it was extremely doubtful if they could work up to a much higher figure without new and powerful engines, which it would take months to make and supply. Mysore, from its inland situation and distance from railways, was already beginning to feel the pressure. The Chief Commissioner of that province was expected to need 1,000 tons of grain a day, which was about equal to the food supply of 50 per cent. of the population. In the distant parts of the district there was much starvation going on at that time. An experienced official said early in August, 'We may look for the first big tragedy in that province' (indeed, information had already been received from Bangalore of two cases of cannibalism). Not only Mysore, which is under the direct control of the Government of India, but the provinces of Bellary, Kurnool, and Cuddapah were expected to be in great danger also. A million of people all round require about 400 tons of grain a day, reckoning rather less than 1 lb. a head for all ages. To secure this amount needed the importation of about 450 tons per day, the loss in transit being more than 10 per cent. The area of the famine was extending every day. Formerly, including Mysore, it

embraced a population of 20,000,000; but in August those best acquainted with the actual state of things put it at nearly 25,000,000. To take what was then considered a moderate estimate, that only one half of the people were likely to be dependent upon imported food, there would be 12½ millions who, if they could get all they wanted, would need imported about 5,625 tons a day, or, per month, 5,625 × 30 = 168,750. Grain was not coming into Madras so fast as these figures would imply, and it might be assumed that the estimate given was exaggerated. Competent authorities, however, met this by saying that the great bulk of the poor, say 30 per cent. of the affected population, were unable to buy the amount of grain they were accustomed to purchase. The people were trying to live anyhow,—upon roots, leaves, fruits (like the nauseous pulp of the *margosa*), and were resorting to many devices to fill their bellies. These means, however, could not be depended upon to maintain life. Judging by the appearance of many thousands on the relief works, a competent authority stated that he should think more than 50 per cent. of the population were already suffering from the abnormal prices of food, and at least one half of them were now trying to live on short commons. The great fear was that local stocks of hoarded grain might at any moment give out, and that the Government might have whole populations on their hands without the prospect of being able to carry food enough to keep them alive.

This was the condition of things when his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, as the chief citizen of Madras, and not in his official capacity as Governor, presided over a meeting held in the Banqueting Hall, Madras, whence an appeal for assistance was made for funds, not to supersede, but to assist, the authorities

in the task that was undertaken. The history of this period can only be glanced at here: it is told fully elsewhere, but inasmuch as it was a noteworthy event at the turning-point of the crisis, it cannot be passed over cursorily, but must be noticed in some detail. As soon as the appeal had been made to England and those parts of India where no famine existed, it was discovered that H.E. the Viceroy and the Supreme Government were opposed to the action taken. Those who, in the press, professed to speak on behalf of the authorities, described the Government of Madras as throwing up their hands, confessing helplessness, and—putting their superiors overboard—appealing for relief to England and creating the impression that their duties were neglected by the members of the Government of India. The fact was that the Government, as Government, had nothing whatever to do with the matter. The first suggestion to appeal to England was made in a semi-public meeting by a non-official gentleman, while it was deprecated by a member of Government who was at the meeting in his citizen capacity. All the preparations for the meeting held on August 4, which was the *fons et origo* of the misunderstanding, were arranged without consultation with any members of the Government, and it was only after the requisition to the Sheriff had been signed that his Grace was asked to preside at the proposed meeting, and consented to do so. This is the whole truth of the connection of Government with the movement in the first instance. Great excitement was caused in Madras, which was increased, and became active animosity against the supreme authorities, when, on the Governor General deprecating a meeting being held in Calcutta to raise contributions, the meeting was given up. That this action was adopted under a misapprehension—so far as Lord Lytton was concerned—

was subsequently proved by the munificent donation his Excellency made to the fund from his private purse, and the great interest he subsequently manifested in the work of the relief committees. Nevertheless, the feeling of the whole Presidency of Madras was sore and bitter. Distress was seen to be intensifying, and deaths were reported to be more numerous than at any previous period. For a time it was supposed that there was not really greater mortality, but that, unwittingly, in the excited state of the public mind, matters were exaggerated. The returns eventually proved that there were only too good grounds for the fears expressed in the south :—

Deaths in August 1877	157,558
„ „ 1876	40,090
Increased deaths	117,468

The Supreme Government had also said it would do everything that was needed to meet the disaster. It was called to mind that in the April previous, when introducing the financial statement, Sir John Strachey had spoken glowingly of the scope which existed for private charity. The people of Madras, who were face to face with the disaster, had evidence enough that the Government could not adequately cope with the distress. No Government existing in the East could do it effectually. What looks now like excited writing, but which those who were on the spot felt was warranted by facts, was indulged in. One Madras journal remarked :— 'There are a million of people on relief works in this Presidency already, another million is receiving subsistence allowance, and a third million is dropping by ones and twos and threes into untimely graves, or by the wayside into no grave at all. This is the dark shading to the picture which half-paralyses us, or would do did we not steel our hearts against this thing and

busy ourselves in disobeying the Supreme Government by relieving those within our reach. Authoritative orders imply responsibility. Very well. If Government is authorised to feed the people and keep them alive and yet they die, will our supreme rulers be consistent, and punish the guilty subordinate Governments ? Dare they ? How could they ? How could they punish the village and district officials in Tinnevelly from whom most distressing reports came the other day of large numbers of people from the dry and rainless districts crowding into the region where showers had fallen, while there was no provision for them ? Disobeying the Supreme Government, the Tinnevellians relieved, so far as they could, the suffering and dying. We honour such disobedience, we ourselves shall practise it, and we call upon the people in India to assert their right to the common feelings of humanity and not allow themselves to be checked in the practice of them.'

Some relief was found in the fact that on August 9 his Excellency the Viceroy determined to visit Madras, see the distress for himself, and take measures to meet the disaster in the two-fold aspect necessary, viz. : (1) succouring the people, and (2) providing means of transport to convey food to the inland districts. Much of the censure which was expressed regarding Lord Lytton not having visited Madras earlier, or attempted to control the policy of the Government of Madras sooner, was unjust. A subordinate Government in India is a hard team to drive in the best of times; when the way is full of difficulties, and the head of a Government is a Duke, with a peculiarly strong will of his own, the task is much harder. In the narrative of the Bombay disaster particulars will be found of the unfortunate disputes which occurred earlier in the year between the Presidency authorities and the Government of India. Lord Lytton was ex-

tremely anxious to avoid further occasion for friction, and the consideration which he paid, throughout the whole of a most trying time, to those who ought to have obeyed his instructions unquestioningly, was beyond all praise. Only those who were on the spot can appreciate the greatness of the service which Lord Lytton rendered in August and September to the Empire which he inaugurated on January 1, 1877. Although from the facts and figures laid before the Supreme Government by the Madras Government, it appeared that their conduct of relief operations was not in complete accordance with the principles laid down by the Government of India, they had, nevertheless, many reasons, such as we have described, for believing that the partial disregard of those principles would be, on the whole, less mischievous in its ultimate effects than the friction, irritation, and general paralysis of effort, likely to arise from authoritative interference with the action of the local Government. From such interference, therefore, in reference to all matters not of paramount importance, the supreme authorities purposely abstained so long as it was possible to do so; that was, until the failure of the summer rains of 1877 had made it clear that famine relief and famine expenditure on a large scale must continue in the Madras Presidency till December or January following.

The end of their resources had been reached by the ryots generally, and they were flocking in large numbers to Government for support. The increase week by week during the month of August shows how rapidly the process went on :—

August 1.

On relief works	957,390
Gratuitously relieved	838,786
Total	1,796,176

August 8.	
On relief works	983,505
Gratuitously relieved	1,001,589
Total	1,985,094
August 15.	
On relief works	958,160
Gratuitously relieved	1,077,682
Total	2,035,842
August 22.	
On relief works	933,055
Gratuitously relieved	1,205,391
Total	2,138,446
August 28.	
On relief works	919,771
Gratuitously relieved	1,326,971
Total	2,246,742

It is no secret that his Grace the Governor of Madras would have liked to cheapen the cost of food to the vast fringe of suffering outside the 2¼ millions on Government relief. If this could have been done by imitating the action of Lord Northbrook, and making large imports, and his Grace had been free to act as seemed best to his judgment, it is possible it would have been attempted. Certainly, the condition of a vast number of people warranted the pity which the Duke of Buckingham and his chief Councillor, Sir William Robinson, felt for them. Nothing of the kind could, however, be done, for the Government of India had determined to abide by the principles of free trade; this determination was reiterated in a most valuable and lucid minute drawn up by Lord Lytton on August 12, and published in Madras during the last days of that month. The authorities at Simla, however, seem to have had a little doubt as to the capabilities of free trade to meet the severe crisis, for early in August telegraphic correspondence passed between Madras and Simla respecting the supply of grain to Madras. The

Government of India, with a view to stimulate trade, suggested the offer of a bounty, which, however, after conferring with the Government of Bengal, they did not think politic eventually to offer. The Calcutta and Madras trade continued active, although the authorities in the latter place had no intelligence of shipments sufficient to supply the wants of the Presidency. The view taken by the Government of Madras at two different periods during the month, was, *first*, on August 8 :—'The pressure of the famine continues to be exceedingly severe, and we have found it necessary, in view of the difficulty in getting grain, to order our district officers to advertise for supplies in each taluk sufficient to ensure a month's provision for relief purposes in those villages where it may not for the moment be otherwise certainly procurable, and further to secure a three weeks'· supply on all relief works where large numbers of relief labourers are collected. We trust that these measures may also lead to the continuance of better supplies in these places.' *Secondly*, on August 22:—'The continuance of the exceedingly high prices of food grains is telling with increasing severity on all classes, more particularly on those of the better classes who have long struggled against their effects. How severe this pressure is in some places may, to some extent, be gathered from the fact that more than 250 Brahmins are residing in the relief camp at Nellore, and living on the Government rations. Even in Tanjore distress is beginning to be severely felt by the lower classes, among whom, however, are included great numbers of wanderers from the neighbouring districts.'

Circumlocution is more powerful in Madras, perhaps, than in any other part of India. Boards are multiplied, and routine is very complicated. No action can be taken of a prompt or direct nature which will not offend

some one. Things there are not much unlike the country spoken of in the 'Arabian Nights' where genii abounded. The chronicler of the events recorded of Cairo, says that a geni appeared one day before a Dervish, and claimed compensation because the latter had knocked out the eye of his daughter. 'I have had nothing to do with your daughter,' replied the Dervish; 'how, then, could I have knocked out her eye?' 'When you threw away some date stones, one of them struck her and injured her eye,' said the geni. 'I did not know your daughter was there, and if she is invisible I am not to blame if a stone casually thrown hits her.' Something of the kind is sure to occur among the multiplicity of Boards here. Prompt action throws some office or some one out of gear. The routine of business in Madras is very cumbersome, how much more so than in other parts of India may be gathered from the following illustrative incident :—The Proceedings of the Madras Government, July 23, 1877, 2,6340, show that a petty squabble between the collector and the district engineer arose out of the former storing rice in an unfinished katcherry, and resulted in three printed pages of foolscap being referred first to the Board of Revenue, and then to the Governor in Council for orders, and at the end of three weeks the squabble had reached the stage of the district engineer being called upon to furnish a reply and explanation. In other parts of India, where divisional commissioners exist, the matter would have been settled in five minutes without troubling either the Board of Revenue or the Government. This kind of procedure manifestly greatly hindered and rendered very cumbersome the work of famine relief, in matters where the greatest urgency was required as much as in questions where delay was of comparatively little consequence. Lord Lytton was

to alter all this, so far as famine was concerned, on his visit to Madras.

The Viceroy left Simla for Madras on August 16.[1] A stay was made at Poona, where, in consultation with Sir Richard Temple and the officers of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway, arrangements were made for pouring grain into Madras by railway at the rate of 1,200 tons per day. It was also arranged that 50 new engines and 300 waggons should be ordered by telegram from England, to be delivered with the least possible delay. Arrangements were, in addition, made that all other traffic whatsoever should give place to the conveyance of grain. It was at once pointed out that the Viceroy was running in the teeth of his dependence upon free trade as described in the minute of August 12. This arrangement was made, it is said, in deference to the opinion expressed by the Governor of Madras that all sea imports would cease in October and November. The stipulation was withdrawn as soon as possible.

On August 27 the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos went to the confines of his Presidency at Raichore to meet the Viceroy, and after bringing his Excellency to Bellary, left him there and returned to Madras to receive Lord Lytton with due honour. Whilst in Bellary the Viceroy conferred with the collector and visited the relief camps. Early on the morning of Wednesday, August 29, in great state, troops lining both sides of the road from the central station to Government House, his Excellency was received in Madras.

The forenoons of the three following days were

[1] His Excellency's suite was composed of Sir Alexander Arbuthnot, K.C.S.I., Head of the Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, an old Madras official, who was substituted for Sir Andrew Clarke at the last moment; Mr. Guildford Molesworth, Consulting Engineer on State Railways; Mr. S. C. Bailey, C.S.I., Personal Assistant to H.E. the Viceroy; Mr. C. E. Bernard, C.S.I.; and Colonel O. T. Burne, C.S.I., C.I.E., Private Secretary.

spent in prolonged discussion of the situation and the means to be adopted to face the calamity; the afternoons were spent in visiting relief camps; the evenings were given to entertainment; the greater part of the nights to correspondence and keeping the current work of the Empire going. The days were laborious, and the nights also. The conferences mark an era in famine administration in India, and details of the topics which formed the subject of discussion may, therefore, be useful. These were nine in number, viz. (1) Private trade; (2) works; (3) relief; (4) three-pie children; (5) relief camps; (6) village relief; (7) village agency; (8) superior agency; and, most important of all, (9) the form of administration by which the campaign should continue to be fought. In the suite of the Viceroy was Major-General Kennedy, R.E., Secretary Public Works Department, Bombay, whose administration of the famine affairs of that Presidency was held to have been most praiseworthy and successful. General Kennedy was present at the discussions. The points which formed the groundwork of conference were these :—

PRIVATE TRADE.

I.—*The sufficiency of private trade*, up to the present time, was discussed in the sixth para. of his Excellency's minute.[1] The Madras Government looked with doubt on the continued capacity of the trade to provide (not to carry) sufficient supplies of food for the future. It was admitted on all hands that it was impossible to make any but the vaguest estimate of what the stocks actually available in India were, but it had been found that the Bengal authorities estimated that there were some 350,000 tons, which ought, and would if need be, be diverted to Madras without touching on the actual

[1] This minute will be found quoted in full in the Appendix to vol. ii.

food requirements of Bengal up to October next. Till October came it was impossible to make a forecast of the prospects of the main crop of the year, and consequently of the stocks available for export.

From the Punjab, North-West Provinces, and Central Provinces, there were large stocks awaiting despatch, and these stocks would keep the great Indian Peninsula Railway fully employed in delivering at Raichore, at the rate of 1,000 to 1,200 tons a day, for the next two or three months. Supplies from this source could not be trusted to last beyond that period, as prices were rising, and there was a tendency for the current of trade to revert towards Cawnpore and Agra.

II.—*The necessity of non-interference with private trade* was dwelt upon at length in the minute. A special argument used by the Viceroy was that a partial interference with trade was scarcely possible, and if Government took up the work at all, it must take it up for all the affected tracts, which it was not in a position to do financially. It was also urged that the landing and carrying capacity of Madras for distributing what might be brought into its ports was scarcely equal to the work now thrown upon it, and that the Government could not take up the duty of carrying save at double the expense which was incurred by private trade, and that a Government transport agency interfered directly and indirectly with the efforts of private trade to distribute, quite as grievously as Government importation checks its efforts to import.

III.—*Distribution into the interior* was discussed in para. 23 of the minute, where it is estimated that from 4,500 to 5,000 tons of food might have to be carried daily into Madras, Mysore, and Hyderabad. A note on this subject by Mr. Bernard shows that the railway system of the Presidency altogether should, with the

help of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, be able to distribute daily 4,000 tons as follows :—

Madras Railway	1,800
Raichore	1,100
Beypore	400
Southern India	700
Total	4,000

WORKS.

The impolicy of petty works was also considered. Notwithstanding their inutility, and despite the recognition by the Government of Madras of the necessity for bringing the people on to works under professional supervision, the figures at that period showed only about a quarter of a million on large works under Public Works Department, to three-quarters of a million on petty works. One serious objection to petty works, which the experience of the Bengal famine had shown, was that not only do the people on them give less than a fair day's work for their wage, and not only are peculation and demoralisation rife, but the works themselves are too often worse than useless. They are left at the end of the famine incomplete, either from gaps in the earthwork where the country was difficult, or from want of masonry bridges, or simply—the exigency being over—from the absence of any reason for completing them, and local funds are unable either to complete or maintain them. Some parts of Behar contain, in the shape of unfinished tanks and fractional portions of roads, painful records of ill-considered undertakings, perverted industry, and wasteful expenditure. As will be inferred from the figures already quoted, when out of two millions of people receiving wages or subsistence from Government, not more than one-eighth are employed under professional supervision, the waste in Madras must have been great.

Another point under this head was—*Has the Madras*

Government ready in hand a sufficiency of large schemes of permanent utility, fairly scattered over the country, to employ a reasonable proportion of the two millions of people drawing their subsistence from Government? The question was one to be answered in the affirmative in view of the minute by the Governor, dated July 17.

The third question arising under this head was as to the *agency and establishment available in Madras for carrying out large works.* The impression made on many minds was that Madras was not very fortunate in its superior Public Works staff, and still less fortunate in the relations between the district officers and the subordinate Public Works staff.[1] It was therefore a matter of urgent necessity on the one hand, and of no difficulty on the other, to supply their deficiencies from the superfluities of other provinces, and especially from Bengal, where the staff was disproportionately strong for the work which the finances of a year like 1877 could undertake.

RELIEF.

The next and most important subject of all for discussion with the Madras Government was that of gratuitous relief. That had now reached enormous proportions, the number being in the returns of August 22 over 1,200,000, and the proportion of these gratuitously-relieved people to those on works had risen during two months from 50 : 100 to 120 : 100. In Bombay the proportion was 46 : 100.[2]

[1] One of the most painful incidents of the administration of the famine was the disputation which occurred between Revenue and Public Works officials, sometimes leading to shameful neglect. Instances might be quoted, but the statement of the fact will suffice.

[2] Some Madras districts differed materially from others in these respects. Take South Arcot and Salem as the worst:—

South Arcot showed:—

On works		729
In camps, &c.	37,000	84,000
Village relief	47,000	

There were three systems under which gratuitous relief was given in Madras, and in regard to each of these systems the correspondence which was sent in to Government day by day exposed serious abuses. The first class were what are called three-pie children. The number of these in proportion to the number of persons employed on works was not perhaps excessive, but (according to the Proceedings of the Government of Madras, No. 2391, of July 27, 1877) the Government allowed divisional and relief officers to raise the allowance to three-pie children to a sum not exceeding six pies. These children were not daily mustered and counted, but had tickets, and were only required to present themselves on pay-day. The system is one which, save under the strictest supervision, could not fail to lend itself to fraud.[1]

RELIEF CAMPS.

The next class was those fed at *relief camps*, &c.

There was naturally much difficulty in keeping these camps under proper control. His Grace complained early in the crisis of their inducing 'wandering and unhomely' habits among the people, and there seemed a tendency among the famine-stricken people

Salem showed:—

On works		47,400
Children	230	195,330
In camps, &c.	50,200	
Village relief	144,900	

[1] Dr. D. Macdonald's Report on Salem Works, printed in the Madras Government's Proceedings, No. 2,365 of July 24, would seem to show that the supervision was not complete. He says, 'I remarked that no children under seven years of age were brought to the works, and upon enquiry, found that according to the orders of the acting sub-collector, all these children were paid at the rate of 10 pies each in the villages to which their parents belonged.' This report (a very damaging one) was criticised by relief officers, head assistants, acting sub-collectors, collectors, sanitary commissioners, and Government, but nowhere was the assertion contradicted, nor did it call out a word of comment or condemnation.

to wander from one camp to another. It was contended that these camps ought really to be hospitals or lazar-houses, and while village relief should be confined to those who are house-ridden, and from infirmity unable to work, camp relief should be a transitional stage for wandering paupers to be received in till such time as they could be drafted off, if fit, to 'works, if unfit permanently, to their villages, and the discipline should be as strict as in a hospital.'

The correspondence, it was contended, showed not only a tendency to keep the numbers at these places much too high, but to give them extravagant medical comforts, and deal with them in all respects much more tenderly than the finances of the Empire would bear. Some instances in support of these assertions quoted below, will give a better idea than any general statement can do of the danger of extravagance, indiscipline, and demoralisation, which ill-controlled camps encourage. Some camps, such as those in Madras city, were as admirably managed as it is possible for such institutions to be.

Dr. Macdonald, writing of the camp at Oossoor, called attention 'to the careless way gratuitous relief is distributed in this town. This attracts many people from the surrounding villages, and as they have no means of cooking and no places of shelter, they spend their money in trash toddy.' Again: 'The people are made so comfortable in this camp, and gratuitous relief is distributed in such an indiscriminate manner, that the people are very unwilling to work for one and half anna a day.' The overseer complained that he could not get labourers, and money sanctioned for works was lying useless in his hands, most of the labourers having deserted. 'There were a number of men in comparatively good condition, who were well able to work, receiving

money. Healthy young women, if they had children in their arms, were considered fit objects for charity; boys and girls, from twelve to sixteen, were receiving ten pies each for doing nothing; such was also the case with children below seven years of age.'

The following is from the deputy tahsildar's inspection report of the relief house at Adauki, in Nellore: 'The above scale (in force there) costs more than two annas a day for each adult. This rate far exceeds that of a relief cooly who labours the whole day on relief works. The present scale attracts many people, as it affords them more rich food than they commonly get in their homes.'

In a letter from the acting collector of Cuddapah to the Board (Madras Government, No. 2301 A., of July 13) was the following recommendation: 'Infants requiring it should be provided with milk. If the necessary supply cannot be obtained, Anglo-Swiss milk should be indented for.' 'In addition, I think they should have broth several times a day.'

A small allowance of betel and tobacco was recommended. Washing places were to be erected, and a weekly issue of oil for inunction was ordered. Coolies were not to be weighed, as they believed the process was preliminary to their being killed (? and eaten).

All these proposals, with the exception of betel and tobacco, appear to have been approved by the Board of Revenue and Government.

VILLAGE RELIEF.

The third class was for persons on village relief who were paid in cash, receiving what is called the money dole. In another section of this work, dealing with the various forms of relief, it is shown how the village relief system arose, while the figures quoted in

this chapter show how enormously the numbers have increased. They vary in different districts, but the figures below show how they stood at this date in some of the typical districts:

Bellary:—			
On works			276,443
Children			74,529
Camps, &c.			27,556
Village relief			120,629
South Arcot:—			
On works			729
Camps, &c.			37,000
Village relief			47,000
Cuddapah:—			
On works			139,748
Children	21,193		
Camps, &c.	14,469		128,216
Village relief	92,554		
Kurnool:—			
On works			202,226
Children			36,150
Camps			24,071
Village relief			23,803
Salem:—			
On works			47,000
Children[1]			230
Camps			50,200
Village relief			144,900

Village relief, the Viceroy argued and the Governor of Madras agreed, should be confined absolutely to those who, from age or infirmity, were unable to do any labour, and should be given to no others whatever.

The object with which relief in villages had been given so largely by the Madras Government was to prevent people wandering in a lawless and uncertain manner over the country, and to prevent the breaking

[1] It appears that in Salem 'three-pie children' were relegated to their villages, where they receive 10 pies in cash! See Dr. Macdonald's report above quoted.

up of home ties, and to ensure a speedy return to cultivation as soon as cultivation became possible. But it was urged that if people who could work even a little were once brought to understand that for them there was no relief to be had, save at works, and if sufficient works were provided, people would not continue to wander aimlessly. They do so at the beginning of a famine undoubtedly, and they may dislike the discipline of large public works, but as soon as they know that in order to live they must labour, and that labour is to be had at certain specified places within reasonable distances, they will even consent to labour. But so long as they can get a larger ration at relief camps than they can earn by labour, they will doubtless wander from camp to camp, and as long as they can get paid in cash at their villages for doing nothing, while looking after their own affairs, and picking up what they can in other ways, they will doubtless prefer a home life and domestic comforts to labour on works.

The Viceroy in argument took up the position that it is not the duty of Government in times of famine to make the encouragement of domestic virtues its first object, but to save life at the minimum possible cost to the taxpayer. It might, however, be safely asserted that, as a matter of fact, demoralisation in another direction is a more inevitable result of the village relief system than the vice of wandering is of its absence. When money is once given to such enormous masses at their own homes, all incentive to labour and earn their living is taken away. It would be a matter of unimagined difficulty ever to bring back these thousands or hundreds of thousands to habits of self-reliance. It was simply impossible that under the system of village inspectors on 20 rs., who were the caste-brothers, friends, or connections of the villagers, Government money should not

be shamelessly and utterly wasted and peculated. It becomes the direct interest of those through whose hands these large sums must pass, and who themselves maintain the registers, to keep as many real and as many fictitious names on their registers as possible, and to be prepared with a reason for keeping them on as long as possible. Therefore, neither will the real sufferers be properly relieved, nor will Government be properly protected; and it may safely be said that a large portion of the money spent on village-relief was either misappropriated or misapplied, and had better have been thrown into the sea. It is absolutely necessary, even at great risk, to put a stop to this system. First, *works* should everywhere be provided, and a properly organised supervising staff be placed on them. Next, some special outside agency—an agency unconnected with the village officers—should be substituted for them *pro tempore* at all events; and every person who is not absolutely incapacitated from any class of work by age or infirmity should be struck off the register, and given a supply of three or four days' food to maintain them till they can go to the nearest work. It was contended that a strong circle agency should be established (preferentially that of outsiders), and no one should be admitted on the register till he is passed by the circle officer. The money dole should cease, and village relief should be given to those who remain, either in the shape of grain (where Government grain is stored) or in the shape of an order on the village grain merchant, signed by the circle officer. There was an obvious difficulty in giving the necessary strength to the proposed circle agency. The village agency in Madras has been not unfairly described as 'an organised brotherhood of Brahmins,' and with them nothing can be done, save by the strictest supervision. To the objection which was

made, that outsiders who do not know the language were necessarily useless, it was argued that the experience of the Bengal famine was not in accordance with this view. North-West Province tahsildars, sub-tahsildars, and non-commissioned officers of the army, knowing nothing of Bengali, were very efficient assistants. It was asked why the agency could not be strengthened below by the employment of non-commissioned officers and men of the Madras army. To this the reply was that the Commander-in-Chief could not spare any officers. For the superior agency military officers from other parts of India, assistant superintendents of police, candidates and probationers, might be indented for, and might be employed, some on works and some as circle officers over villages. It was argued that for every 100 rs. their salaries might cost, ten times that sum would be saved from the pockets of peculators, and from people who required no support.

The chief subject for discussion, however, was with regard to the proposed reorganisation of famine direction in Madras. The delay in getting work done, the impossibility of Boards, or of Councils, with divided responsibility, to deal promptly, uniformly, and strongly with emergencies such as this, were the chief grounds urged for a change. It was also held that experience had proved in famine matters the advantage of a single head over many heads. A comparison of the results of the uniform guidance of General Kennedy in Bombay, with the results which the figures showed for Madras, the unsatisfactory relations in the latter Presidency between district officers and the Public Works Department, the trivial matters that had to be settled by the Board and by Government, and the delay in getting returns from Madras (which was always three weeks behind Bombay) were held to be all points in the

same direction, viz., the necessity of concentrating the direction of the famine on a single responsible head, with a chief of the staff responsible to him, who should have control over *all* famine operations, transport, works and relief, and to whom all famine matters should be reported, leaving the ordinary administration of the country to the Council and the Board of Revenue. The alternative to this arrangement was that his Excellency the Governor General should move the headquarters of the Supreme Government to Madras, and personally superintend the administration of famine affairs. There were many and grave objections to such a course, on the part of both the superior and subordinate authorities. To the Governor of Madras such action would imply want of confidence in him of so serious a nature that nothing short of resignation would have sufficed. It was therefore a matter of relief to both parties when his Grace signified his consent to an arrangement whereby he became a dictator,[1] so far as the constitution of the country permits a position of personal despotism, the dictatorship being tempered and controlled by a Personal Assistant who possessed the confidence of the Supreme Government. Another suggestion which had been made by Sir Richard Temple was revived, and that was the necessity for the appointment of two or three Famine Commissioners, who should control operations in all departments over half a dozen districts, who should be peripatetic officers, and who should report direct to the chief of the staff. It was painful to see the amount of time, temper, and labour that was thrown away on discussions between civil officers, sanitary officers, and Public Works Department officers, as to such a question

[1] Telegrams in Blue Book No. IV. would seem to show that the first suggestion of a dictatorship proceeded from his Grace, and not, as was commonly supposed, from the Government of India. But it is doubtful if *all* the telegrams and correspondence are published.

as closing the side of a shed with a mat screen, or whether the fumes of sulphur may be used as a disinfectant, and all of which, after an acrimonious discussion between three departmental officers and the Board of Revenue, could finally be settled by no less an authority than the Governor in Council. Such questions might be settled by Commissioners on the spot in five minutes, and it was thought Madras officers would doubtless make the best Commissioners.

One other point remained for discussion. The use to which the proceeds of charitable subscriptions could be put. That, however, was not formally discussed, the question settling itself in a most dramatic manner by the evolution of events in non-official circles.

In each case, save that of Famine Commissioners, the Government of Madras gave way, and on that point there was a compromise; it was agreed that members of the Board of Revenue should be deputed, as heretofore, to visit the distressed districts, inspect relief operations, and report to Government the manner in which orders were being carried out. The change actually proposed was that the famine districts should be divided into two or more Commissionerships, each under a Commissioner acting as chief executive officer in his division. The Governor of Madras held that it was unwise to take his best collectors from their districts to become Commissioners; that it was doubtful whether functionaries with such extensive charges as those assigned to the Madras collectors would work well under Commissioners; and that what was required in the way of inspection and enforcement of Government orders could be done by deputing members of the Board of Revenue, from time to time, to visit particular districts without assigning to them any definite territorial charge. On that point the Viceroy's opinion and that of his col-

league, Sir Alexander Arbuthnot, was unchanged; but they did not deem the point essential, and did not press it.

A *Gazette of India Extraordinary* was issued at Madras, containing the result of the conference. 'In the first place his Grace the Governor has resolved to frame a rule under section 28 of the "Indian Councils' Act," providing that all famine questions coming before the Government of Madras shall be laid before his Grace the Governor, and disposed of by him. Orders issued under this rule will thus have the force of orders of the Governor in Council.' In official language (a letter written by the Chief Secretary of the Government of Madras to Mr. Bernard) 'his Grace the Governor was glad to find that his Excellency the Viceroy is in accord with himself as to the main principles which ought to guide the famine policy of Government.'[1] There was agreement regarding grain supply, public works, and gratuitous relief. It was arranged that both engineering and supervising staff should be strengthened. His Grace the Governor asked the Viceroy to lend him from other parts of India :—

(*a*) Ten 1st or 2nd grade executive engineers, ten 3rd or 4th grade executive engineers, twenty assistant engineers of not less than one year's standing, twenty upper subordinates of the higher class;

(*b*) One hundred active young European officers belonging to one or other of the following classes :—

Staff corps, artillery, or other military officers, not more than thirty-five years of age.

Assistant or acting-assistant superintendents of police.

European inspectors of police of the better class.

Assistants in the Forest Department of not less than eighteen months' service.

[1] The text of the correspondence appears in the Appendix to vol. ii.

Assistants from the engineering department of the railways.

His Excellency the Governor General signified acquiescence in the proposal. The Viceroy was greatly pleased to find that the Government of Madras had decided that the Famine Department should be under the immediate guidance and control of the Governor; and that some shortening of the administrative chain had been found possible. The Viceroy believed that much benefit to the afflicted populations, in whose behalf his Grace had done so much, as well as great financial advantage to the public treasury, could not fail to result from the increased efficiency of action and the improved unity of control, which would be secured by the arrangements now made. The Viceroy and Governor General also highly appreciated the motives which, in recognition of the great imperial interests concerned, had induced the Governor of Madras to associate with his personal administration in the manner indicated in paragraph 3 of the Madras Secretary's letter, the services of an officer possessing the special confidence of the Government of India. It was, however, pointed out that it was essential to the efficiency of this arrangement, that all famine papers and questions submitted to the Government should pass through the hands of the Personal Assistant, as was settled at the conference above referred to. 'It was, of course, by no means suggested, nor is it at all desirable, that any obstacle should be placed in the way of the personal relations of the Secretariat with, and access to, the Governor of Madras. But it is absolutely necessary that the Personal Assistant to the Governor, accredited as he is by the Government of India, should have full opportunity of stating his views to the Governor at the proper time.'

The contents of the *Gazette Extraordinary* were

published in one of the Madras morning papers on September 1. The news of the arrangements made came to the public as a 'bolt from the blue.' At first sight it seemed as if Sir William Robinson and his colleague in the Council had been condemned or superseded, and much irritation was felt in consequence, as all men in Madras had witnessed the zeal and devotion which had marked their conduct for nine months. It was thought, if a Personal Assistant were needed to his Grace, Sir William should have been appointed, but further consideration showed that if the Supreme Government gave up control it must be to an officer of their own. Virtually the Governor's Council and the Board of Revenue were superseded, and the mortification felt by valued officers must have been very great. But in the best spirit of service, which knows how to obey as well as to command, the supersession was cheerfully accepted, and General Kennedy was received with courtesy, if not cordiality, by all Madras officials.

In one of the Madras newspapers the change of policy was strongly condemned. The chief point of objection in this quarter was to the legality of all that had been done, but especially as to the Duke of Buckingham's new position, and a letter calling this and other points into question was sent to *The Times*. In regard to the chief of these objections, it may suffice to say here, as was said in Madras at the time, that the arrangement was proposed by the Viceroy, after consultation with his legal advisers, and that it had received telegraphic approval from her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, who also took legal opinion in England before giving his consent. The arrangement is similar to that which obtains in the Viceroy's Council, whereby Lord Northbrook, in 1874, and Lord Lytton subsequently, took personal charge of the Famine Department, under Sec-

tion 8 of the 'Indian Councils Act.' Section 28 of that Act enacts the same provisions for the Councils of Bombay and Madras, as are enacted by Section 8 for the Governor General's Council. Section 28 provides that orders issued by the Governors of Presidencies, in conformity with rules made by themselves under the said section, shall have the effect of Orders in Council. The Secretary of State's despatch, dated August 9, 1861, which forwarded the Act of Parliament, distinctly explains that Section 8 (and, as explained in paragraph 29 of the despatch, Section 28 also), was enacted to remedy the former cumbrous mode of conducting business in the Indian Councils, by giving departmental responsibility, and enabling the head of the Government to transfer any special branch of business to the charge of an individual member of the Government. The section was in fact drafted to legalise the system of business which had been in force in the Supreme Council since Lord Canning's time, and which was introduced into the Bombay Council in Sir Seymour Fitzgerald's time. The despatch of August 1861 authorises the Governor General to extend the system, as he may think desirable. On this authority the Government of India has habitually acted without doubt or question. By a distribution of business according to rules framed under Section 8 or 28, questions are not necessarily, or indeed at all, removed from the legal authority and cognizance of the members of Council. Any member of Council can, notwithstanding these rules, call for papers pertaining to any department, and he can record a minute upon them ; but, unless the Head of the Government directs otherwise, the orders passed in accordance with the rules will issue nevertheless.

It was pettishly said that the arrangement was a prelude to the abolition of the Councils in minor Presi-

dencies. No mention and no suggestion of any such abolition was made, either by the Viceroy, or by the Governor of Madras, when the discussions took place. It is true that a former Governor General did once suggest that the Council of a minor Presidency might with advantage be abolished. But the present Viceroy has always been strongly opposed to any measure which might throw more business upon the Supreme Government than it now has to transact. He considers that the Government of India has now more than enough on its hands. Lord Lytton has already, with the consent of his Council, done much to enlarge and widen the discretion committed to local Governments by Lord Mayo's financial measures of December 1870. The number of departments in which the local Governments have full financial control has been greatly increased; financial control practically means complete, and within certain defined limits absolute, control of all these departments. And there can be no doubt but that the power of local Governments has greatly increased, and the number of occasions in which the Supreme Government interposes has greatly decreased, during the last six or seven years. No one who has watched closely the working of either the Supreme or a Local Government, can be ignorant of this fact. And the financial measures carried out during 1877 went further than ever in the direction of localising the finances of most of the great departments of the State. But when there is a question of a great campaign against the forces of nature, or against other enemies—a campaign costing eleven or twelve millions sterling, and involving millions of lives—the Governor General in Council, who is responsible for the safety of the people and for the solvency of the Empire, is in duty bound to guide and control operations so far as he sees occasion for interposing his authority.

Generally speaking, the new *régime* was approved in Madras—as it was elsewhere in India—and the following remarks made at the time were fully justified by events:—'"Councils of war never fight," and councils of deliberation during a great crisis like the famine now afflicting us are too slow in their movements to do effectual service. A war, to be successful, must be fought by one man: a famine must be encountered in like manner. We therefore are disposed to hail with satisfaction the new plan of campaign which has been decided upon, and the Government of India deserve some credit—and not a little—for abnegating their position, and handing over their responsibility and authority to the Governor of Madras. His Grace, we have no doubt, will have felt the additional burden placed upon him with a considerable amount of confidence, and have braced himself to face and fight the famine as successfully as he used to drive his railway engine in England. In his minute of August 12, H.E. the Governor General spoke of the famine as a battle, and felicitously alluded to the line of attack having been broken in two places, viz., Madras and Mysore. To those points, his Excellency continued, must the forces of Government be concentrated, and practically how best to do this was the programme placed before the notabilities who recently sat in conference in Government House. Yesterday we described somewhat meagrely what was proposed; to-day our readers may see for themselves, in the correspondence between the Governor General and the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, the precise details of the arrangement. That these will be approved in the Madras Presidency, seeing that his Grace is in full charge—the Governor's aptitude for practical details is now as clearly recognised by the supreme authorities as it has long been known in

Madras—we have no doubt. If, however, in the process of change, a little friction should be engendered, we trust all affected thereby will make every possible allowance. Those great hindrances to prompt effort, Councils and Boards, have been removed, the machinery of administration is the simplest conceivable : we are sanguine the results recorded will be the best attainable."[1]

One of the places visited by Lord Lytton during his tour in Madras was the Monegar Choultry and the relief camps adjoining. After passing through the institution the camp was visited. The first place entered was the hospital in which the more serious cases were placed. There were about thirty inmates, all shockingly thin, and too weak in many cases to lift their eyelids to look at the distinguished visitors who bestowed upon them a glance of pity. It was six o'clock in the evening when the Viceroy and his suite passed through that shed : before five o'clock next morning fourteen of the thirty had died.

With the Viceroy came rain. Nearly the whole of the time of his Excellency's stay south of the Tungabudra, rain fell. It was too late to save many crops, but it preserved some, and had not a little to do with the revival of the country which took place almost immediately.

Two or three weeks were passed by the Viceroy in visiting various places in Mysore and Madras, and on September 21 his Excellency left on his return journey to Simla, having faced and, aided by the rain-clouds, successfully fought the great enemy he had ventured forth to encounter. Meeting the Governor of Madras and General Kennedy at Jollarpett junction, the Viceroy learnt, to his disappointment, that during the three weeks which had elapsed since the Government of

[1] *Madras Times*, September 2, 1877.

Madras had publicly announced their entire adhesion to the principles of his famine policy, no subsidiary orders of any kind had been issued with a view of applying these principles to the difficulties in hand. Even the correspondence of the district officers on famine subjects continued to go through the Board of Revenue as heretofore ; and in the more important matter of drafting people from camps and from village relief on to works, Lord Lytton could not learn that district officers had received any orders whatever. The delay was attributable to the Duke's visit to Ootacamund; but none the less was it to be lamented that such an admirable opportunity as the rain had given of reducing the number of those gratuitously relieved, and of introducing more economical management, was allowed to pass by. The Madras Government, were now spending 60 lakhs (600,000*l.*) a month, 'a great part of which, it was asserted, went in maintaining a system of relief which was believed to be at once wasteful, demoralising, and above all others open to peculation.' If, when the rain of the early part of September again made agriculture possible and hopeful, the masses on gratuitous relief had at once been put to work, a great majority of them would have preferred devoting their labour to their own fields, and a sum equal to a quarter or a third of the monthly expenditure might at once have been struck off without danger or difficulty. Before the Duke of Buckingham left the Viceroy to return to Madras, he had examined and approved the code of instructions which, with General Kennedy's assistance, had been drawn up for the guidance of officers engaged in famine relief, and which the Governor was then about to issue. As they provided fully for all the principal objects on which the policy of the Government of India laid stress, the Viceroy had no doubt that the

desired reforms would be introduced and the main object of his journey would at length be accomplished. Without this security for obtaining some practical result to their deliberations, his Excellency would have hesitated about returning to Simla, and was prepared to remain some further time in Southern India.

Thenceforward the history of the famine campaign becomes monotonous. The large share which the relief committees had in restoring the country will be found described elsewhere. Thanks to the rain which fell and improved the state of things, though prices remained high for many months, the people were ready to return to their homes and occupations. The numbers on relief works became fewer, and those on gratuitous relief were carefully weeded. General Kennedy spent the greater part of September in making himself thoroughly acquainted with the condition of the people and the wants of the country, and on September 24 the new *régime* was formally inaugurated by a Government Order,[1] in which provision was made for tests being applied to those who sought for work, and gratuitous relief given only to the sick, the bed-ridden, and those too old or too young to work. The provisions were couched in humane language, and the system is held to have worked well. The season proving propitious, and the north-east monsoon having come, though late, the system had allies which may have greatly aided in the success said to have been achieved by it. Nobody is more ready than General Kennedy himself to acknowledge the great aid which the rains of September rendered to the policy he was charged to carry out.

Among the minor events of the period which should not be overlooked was a daily service of telegrams reporting the state of the weather and prospects of the

[1] See Appendix to vol. ii.

season in all parts of India. As there was danger in Rajputana and the north-west, as well as the fear of continuance of distress in Madras, these telegrams were of the utmost service. The Press Bureau established by Lord Lytton, and placed under the charge of Mr. Roper Lethbridge, C.I.E., worked this arrangement most successfully, and thereby did the public a great service.

Deaths in September 1877	140,165
„ „ „ 1876	36,688
Increased deaths . .	103,477

CHAPTER VII.

THE FAMINE ON THE DECLINE.

On October 6 the Government of Madras could write thus hopefully of the prospects of the Presidency:—

'The engineering department having been strengthened by the arrival of additional officers, is now in a position to set out and control efficiently many more works. A careful examination has therefore been made of various projects which have been brought forward at different times for the extension or improvement of irrigation works, and those which hold out the best hope of favourable results and are suitable for employment of relief labour, have been selected for execution. The heavy rain storms to which we alluded in our last despatch have caused considerable damage to the south-west branch of the Madras railway, while the freshes in the Palar and Pennair consequent on the rainfall have interrupted for some days the railway crossings of the Southern India Railway over those rivers. Many of the largest tanks in some of the districts are reported as full to overflowing. The rivers in the Cuddapah district have been in flood, while the Cauvery and Kistna continue in fresh. The Godavery, however, has never risen to any material extent during the present season, and the last telegraphic report states that, with all the anicut shutters in position, the depth of water on the crest of the work was only 26 inches, and the river was falling. Should there not be a considerable rise in the

river, there must be a serious failure in the delta crops. From the district of Ganjam, where the prices have risen so as to cause considerable distress, the latest reports are better, there having been a fall of rain in the last days of the month, although the rainfall there is still very short. The accounts from Vizagapatam and Kistna indicate improved prospects.

'Throughout the Presidency a considerable portion of the growing crops have revived under the influence of the late rains, but the grain yields from them will probably be comparatively scanty. In the extreme south, in Tinnevelly and Madura, the reports show that the greater number of those in distress are the families of coolies who have migrated to Ceylon or elsewhere, under the pressure of high prices. A considerable number of persons are reported to have wandered to Trevandrum. Arrangements are being made for withdrawing them and placing them upon works in connection with the canal communication from Tirur to the Cochin backwater. The imports of grain at Madras have continued large, but within the last week trade has become uncertain, and the export of grain by rail from Madras along the north-western line has been much reduced, not more than half the waggons for that line having been used on some days, and merchants having countermanded their consignments when on the point of being loaded. The imports *viâ* Raichore have also shown signs of diminution, and have never approached the average quantity which the Bombay Government led us to hope for. The collectors of the ceded districts have been called upon to consider the effect which such diminution may exercise upon their respective districts, and meanwhile the movements of grain and the state of markets will be narrowly watched.'

Among the more interesting papers issued at this

period was a statement showing, district by district, the condition of the people, the state of the crops and of trade, and the tendency of prices, as reported by the collectors in their narratives. The statement is worthy of quotation in full.

GODAVERY.

Standing crops doing well. Paddy slightly blighted in two taluks; ragi, chama, and arega being harvested. Out-turn from ¼ to ¾.	Labouring classes have sufficient work. Cholera is subsiding. 33 wanderers were fed in three taluks.	Trade is dull, and prices are falling.

KISTNA.

All the standing crops are doing well. Grubs and locusts reported to damage cholum, but not to any great extent. Water supply is very good. Agricultural preparations for later dry crop are briskly proceeding. The season is very promising.	The condition of the people is good; there is sufficient work for the labouring classes, but high prices still prevail and press on the poor.	Trade is active. Prices generally are falling.

NELLORE.

Crops promise well, except that dry crops have been injured by grasshoppers in Ongole, Kundukur, and Kavali. The season is encouraging, and agricultural operations are active.	Rain-fed tanks have not filled as usual, the dry earth absorbing water in an unusual manner. The people are in good spirits, but high prices will continue to cause much suffering for some months. Sickness is decreasing, the numbers in camps are expected to increase again in December.	Trade impeded in places by the rivers and want of draught cattle; active elsewhere. Prices rising in three, falling at three, and stationary at five markets.

CUDDAPAH.

Crops are being sown generally, and some	The condition of the people is improving	Trade is less active in rice as the villages

are being harvested. The change in prospects has been most rapid and complete, but high prices cause ryots to restrict their demands for labour to the lowest limit.	steadily, but reported bad in Jammalamadugu and Proodatoor. It may now be expected to improve, owing to falling prices. The recent harvest has enabled many cultivators to leave works and subsist while cultivating for winter crop.	have a supply of dry grain more or less from recent harvest. Transport is impeded. Prices are falling.

KURNOOL.

The standing crops are generally good. Agricultural operations are progressing on black cotton soil. Good rain has fallen in all taluks.	The condition of the people is fair on the whole. Cholera is abating and confined to a few villages in Cumbum and Koilkuntla.	Trade is moderate, active in both rice and dry grains. Old stores are now coming to market. Prices generally are falling.

BELLARY.

The crops are doing well almost everywhere. Prospects of the later crops are excellent.	Condition of people is much improved everywhere, on works and in villages. In the latter many show signs of having gone through much suffering. No epidemic disease exists.	Trade is not very active in the west, but is so elsewhere. The cessation of imports in Adoni has caused a temporary rise in prices there, and apparent reaction, but does not affect prospects. Prices generally are falling, except rice and ragi at five markets.

NORTH ARCOT.

Decided and extremely satisfactory improvement has taken place in the season. The crops are thriving.	The condition of the people on works has improved, and the infirm paupers in villages are also said to have improved. Rainfall has been heavy, and many tanks in Punganoor have breached.	Trade in rice still active. Newly harvested ragi is brought to market. Prices generally falling, except at Punganoor and Chittoor.

CHINGLEPUT.

Crops much benefited by recent rains; some are being harvested with a moderate out-turn. The water in all tanks except those that are rain-fed is sufficient for present need, but the bringing of the crops to maturity must depend on the monsoon. Some complaints of want of ploughing cattle exist.	The condition of people is generally satisfactory, but reported to be below par owing to high prices of food grains. The cultivating class are gradually but steadily returning to their villages.	Prices falling. In the Ponneri taluk the grain is being consumed as soon as harvested.

SOUTH ARCOT.

The crops are thriving; some are being harvested, but the out-turn is low. Crops are being generally sown. Rain-fed tanks have not yet filled.	Condition of people generally is healthy, but cholera is still prevalent.	Trade is dull, and prices generally are falling, but cholum is quoted as sold only in two markets.

TANJORE.

The standing crops are generally flourishing. Cumboo, ragi, and cholum are being harvested in parts. The out-turn is from ⅛ to ½. Cultivation is being actively carried on, but water-supply in Puttacottai is estimated as not equal to thirty days' supply.	The condition of people is generally good. Cholera is prevalent.	Trade is active at Negapatam, Combaconum, and Shealli; dull elsewhere. Prices are rising at Tanjore and Combaconum; falling elsewhere.

MADURA.

Some grains are being harvested; the out-turn is poor; in garden lands ¾, others ¼.	Condition of people on works good; and no perceptible change in their state has oc-	Trade is active in rice. Dry grains are brought to weekly market in some places,

Young crops are just germinating. The water-supply is good, except in kusbah Ramnad and its vicinity. Cultivation is general, but not brisk in wet crop lands from want of cattle and seed.	curred in villages. Cholera still lingers.	but only in small quantities. Prices are falling.

TINNEVELLY.

The crops are reported in fair condition. Grain harvest is in progress with an out-turn below average. Agricultural operations are active almost everywhere. Many tanks have received a fair supply.	The condition of people is generally good. Cholera continues.	Trade is fairly active in rice. The tendency of prices is to fall.

TRICHINOPOLY.

The crops are thriving. Agricultural operations are active. Early crops are being harvested. Out-turn is about ⅞. Prospects are favourable.	The condition of the people is fairly healthy, but cholera is increasing. Trade is active. The grain as harvested is being brought to market.	Prices are falling, except in Museri, where they have risen owing to increased demand from Salem.

SALEM.

Crops are thriving, some harvested; out-turns half. Agricultural operations are active.	Condition of people on works is fair and improving in villages.	Trade is active. Prices are falling except in three taluks; but dry grains are not procurable at several markets.

COIMBATORE.

Crops are in good condition everywhere. Paddy has yielded a full crop, other grains	*The condition of people on works generally is fair, and in villages* tending to improve-	*Trade is active in rice and seed grain. Prices are falling except* those of some dry

under a half. Supply of well-water in Pollachy is still scanty. Agricultural operations are active. The young crops are coming up.	ment. Cholera is generally prevalent.	grains which are rising in consequence of the demand for seed.

NEILGIRIS.

The standing crops are in good condition. The little harvest gave an out-turn of ¼. Agricultural operations are active.	The health of the people is fair.	Trade is sufficient in rice, but the import of dry grain not so. The price of rice is rising.

MALABAR.

The crops are in good condition. The yield of those harvested is above the average. Agricultural prospects are very good.	Poorer classes have means of obtaining employment, and the pressure on them has abated, but their condition will not improve unless prices fall. Cholera is abating.	Private trade is very active. Prices are rising at Cochin, and falling at Calicut.

SOUTH CANARA.

The standing first rice crop is in excellent condition, and is ripe for harvest. The dry crops are equally good.	The present condition of the district is highly satisfactory, and the future prospects still more so.	Trade by sea is not active owing to bad weather. Prices are generally falling.

On November 3 the Government of Madras were able to announce the welcome tidings that the north-east monsoon had burst in all the districts usually affected by it. There was one exception—Ganjam; there rain was urgently needed, as the crops had withered and were withering. The general prospects of the season continued hopeful. The water supply was abundant; cattle were fast regaining their normal condition; fodder was plentiful; agricultural operations

active, and the growing crops were in good condition. In many parts of the country, however, the heavy rainfall had developed malaria, and fever was exceedingly prevalent and fatal, particularly in Kurnool. The fever was a terrible survival of the famine, and its effects on the death returns marked.

The times were very trying for the agriculturists in some of the districts; in the north particularly. Seed rotted in the ground because there was too much rain; in other cases the seed was bad through having been kept eighteen months, and would not sprout, or if it did sprout, was diseased. Worst of all, locusts came and devoured every green thing that grew. They were particularly bad in the Cuddapah and Nellore districts, where they appeared in large flights. The damage done by them was very severe, but was fortunately confined to a small area. The Government instructed the collector to leave no means untried to destroy them, but the evil seems to have had its own way. The people tried to burn them up in large fires, but the plan did not succeed to any great extent.

On November 24 the Government considered the time had come when all the reserve grain in the districts of Bellary, Cuddapah, and Kurnool, in excess of requirements for works, camps, or village relief (in which manner, during some time past, they had authorised its consumption) might be disposed of, and they accordingly directed the collectors of those districts to sell it by auction at the weekly markets nearest to the depôts where it is stored, in small parcels of five bags each, after giving due notice of the sales. This was done, and the stock got rid of.

His Grace the Governor proceeded on a tour lasting nearly a month in the southern districts, and found the appearance of the country very favourable. Soon after,

however, heavy and disastrous rains fell in Madura, Tinnevelly, and neighbouring districts, causing much harm to standing crops. But in spite of this, and in spite too of many of the crops threatening to turn out badly, 1877 closed with an improved state of things and general hopefulness. The famine was got under, and in token of a sense of this Major-General Kennedy was created a Knight Commander of the Star of India at Calcutta, on the anniversary of the ceremonies at Delhi when the Queen was proclaimed Empress of India. This was considered a gratifying sign of the evil being at least partially overcome.

Under the Government Order of September 24 Civil officers were made responsible for sending to relief works those in need of employment, and Public Works Department officers for providing employment for them. As much of the relief labour as possible was to be concentrated upon large useful works under professional supervision. Tasks were insisted on; frequency of payment, and special treatment of special cases enjoined. Relief of all sorts was to be confined to those really in need; the village dole limited to absolutely home-ridden paupers; the remainder of those requiring gratuitous relief being concentrated in closed camps, except three-pie children.

	On Village Relief	In Camps
In last week of September the numbers were .	941,000	571,000
„ October „ „ .	656,000	226,000
„ November „ „ .	287,000	100,000
„ December „ „ .	196,000	59,000
„ January „ „ .	124,000	45,000

When the new *régime* was instituted there were large feeding centres in existence and unenclosed camps. These latter have been jocosely described as 'a sort of

hotel where there is no reckoning with the host; anybody almost could get fed for the asking, and where there was little if any check or restraint imposed.' A table is appended showing the reductions which took place from September 4 to the end of the year. It was the fifteenth of October before the new rules were in fairly good working order, and from that time it will be seen that the numbers were reduced largely week by week. Many received help from the charitable funds to continue work, whilst others were supported for a time from its resources. The table is as follows:—

Week ending	On Works	On Gratuitous Relief, including three-pie Children	Total
September 4, 1877 . . .	901,227	1,430,885	2,332,112
„ 11, „ . . .	773,094	1,513,555	2,286,649
„ 18, „ . . .	708,255	1,633,437	2,341,692
„ 25, „ . . .	615,251	1,651,324	2,266,575
October 2, „ . . .	628,259	1,603,721	2,231,980
„ 9, „ . . .	587,228	1,531,255	2,118,483
„ 16, „ . . .	542,853	1,283,966	1,826,819
„ 23, „ . . .	484,365	1,060,034	1,544,399
„ 30, „ . . .	417,370	944,839	1,362,209
November 6, „ . . .	363,298	721,879	1,085,177
„ 13, „ . . .	290,895	624,027	914,922
„ 20, „ . . .	300,558	513,800	814,358
„ 27, „ . . .	252,123	411,715	663,838
December 4, „ . . .	237,797	365,589	603,386
„ 11, „ . . .	208,517	317,001	525,518
„ 18, „ . . .	183,006	302,302	485,308
„ 25, „ . . .	202,323	281,432	483,755

The death-rate for October was as follows:—

Deaths in October 1877	128,962
„ 1876	34,249
Increased deaths . . .	94,713

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FAMINE IN 1878.

THE extent to which the famine extended into the year 1878 may be estimated by the following figures:—

	On Works	Gratuitously relieved	Total
January 1, 1878 . . .	201,589	267,483	469,072
„ 8, „ . . .	168,673	233,342	402,015
„ 15, „ . . .	158,643	210,896	369,539
„ 22, „ . . .	144,849	191,641	336,490
„ 29, „ . . .	145,693	181,060	326,753
February 5, „ . . .	150,906	165,072	315,978
„ 12, „ . . .	141,551	153,981	295,532
„ 19, „ . . .	132,062	146,339	278,401
„ 26, „ . . .	140,006	142,564	282,570
March 5, „ . . .	126,969	133,131	260,100

In the month of February something like a scare was experienced. Sir Michael Kennedy, in a letter written to Mr. Stewart Bayley, C.S.I., Personal Assistant (famine) to the Viceroy, referred to a reaction which had set in, and the fear which was experienced that distress of an acute kind would once more occur. This letter was published in some of the Calcutta newspapers. It was in exact accordance with the information received by the Executive Committee of the Relief Fund. For once in Indian history, official and non-official reports were in harmony. It was believed that Southern India was on the threshold of another famine, not perhaps quite so disastrous as that of 1876–77, but still sufficiently widespread to cause the greatest possible concern. The grounds for this opinion were to be found by taking

a glance backwards over a few months, and noting the progress of events, which seemed to lead to but one conclusion, viz., the continuance and deepening of distress. In August 1877, when the land should have been undergoing resuscitation through the influence of a damp and cloudy atmosphere and drenching night dews, the air was abnormally dry, and preparation of the ground for the reception of seed was impossible. In September and October soaking rains fell, and the utmost possible haste was exhibited by agriculturists to plough the land and put in seed. But in a vast number of cases implements were wanting, bullocks were dead, and the means of providing them were few or altogether non-existent. Owing to unforeseen difficulties, it was nearly the end of October before the relief committees were able to distribute money to destitute ryots for seed grain and purchase of bullocks. Meanwhile, in a manner not easy to describe, branches of trees were drawn across the soil as a substitute for ploughing; men, instead of cattle, were yoked to ploughs. The people had endeavoured to plough and sow their lands, and the result was this. At a much later period than usual the fields were prepared and sown. The preparation was even more defective than usual. What that means, those acquainted with Indian agriculture can imagine. Much of the seed was bad, having been kept eighteen months; numbers of families had starved, but those who remained had preserved some seed corn wherewith to 'try again' when seasonal rains arrived. In a great many cases, owing to the excessive wetness of the soil, the seed rotted, and sowing had to be repeated two or three times. Then, when the green tender blade did push its way through the earth and the labourer went cheerfully to his task of weeding and nurturing the plants of promise, an army of locusts which no man could number covered large stretches of country and ate up every green thing.

From places so far apart as Nellore and Tinnevelly the same reports regarding mischief done were received. An American gentleman in the south described this visitation in most graphic language; the solid earth seemed in motion, so great were the numbers of these insects; compounds and fields appeared as if they had been scorched with devastating fires after the pests had passed. The consequence of all these things was that, when in February the new crops of dry grain, cholum, cumboo, raggi, &c., should be taken to market in large quantities, reducing the high prices of food, none was available. The lateness of the season was not alone to blame for this; it was not that a few weeks hence the granaries would once more be filled; it was that there was no grain to bring to market. The reports from the districts were most disheartening. In some cases the yield was so poor that only enough produce was expected to be reaped as would suffice for seed at the next sowing (such worthless seed, the remnants of disease and pestilence!) and till that period, and till the crops were harvested, say in September following, at the earliest, the people must be provided with work and food. The report from Salem—the writer being a Bengal civilian, assistant to the collector, a man by no means given to the expression of alarmist views—may be taken as a specimen of the opinions formed by those in the districts. He reported as follows:—'The situation is decidedly more gloomy than was anticipated at the commencement of the year. The dry crops have been disastrous failures, owing to the excessive rain, all which generated leaf at the expense of produce. Accounts from the west of the Salem taluk and the south of the district generally, place the harvest at hardly more than a *fourth* of an average out-turn.

'The rice crop—nowhere important save in the

tract on the banks of the Cauvery—is estimated at 10 annas of an average harvest (16 annas).

'The condition of the cultivator is deplorable in the extreme; his stocks exhausted, and his purchasing power reduced enormously by successive calamities.

'Help is urgently needed to enable him to purchase seed grain and to maintain his family till the next harvest, unhappily far distant.'

A subsequent report was couched in similar strains, whilst a fortnight previously the same gentleman had indicated to Government the necessity for relief works being provided. The *Madras Times* of February 6 said: 'We had the opportunity, a week ago, of conversing with many of the delegates from the districts who attended the meeting in the Banqueting Hall, and we were grieved almost beyond expression at the dead level of dolefulness which marked the descriptions of the state of the country given by each and all of them. We have been informed by a gentleman who attended the meeting of the executive relief committee on Monday evening that that meeting was the most melancholy one that had been held. Reports of a most dismal character were read, showing the necessity for relief being continued for many months, while the committee found their funds were nearly gone, having been spent in mitigating the sufferings of a previous disaster. Speaking roughly, we believe we are perfectly safe in saying that the dry grain crops have been more or less a failure in the district of *Bellary*; a gentleman from the chief town of that district told us last week that they could not suspend their relief operations in the beginning of February, as they had hoped; they have failed in a portion of *Nellore*; *Cuddapah* has suffered to some extent; from *North Arcot* we have no definite intelligence; *Chingleput* is already suffering; *South Arcot*, distress likely to be very bad; *Salem*,

distress already great; *Coimbatore*, not at all good; *Madura*, suffering from excessive rain. So far we have referred only to failure in dry grain crops, but in these seasons of disaster the wet crops, hitherto unaffected, have been visited by a pest or blight, and we hear of fields withering whilst covered with water.' 'Wandering' on the part of starving poor again commenced. Families from the country were once more to be seen on the main roads leading into Madras. People were searching for employment. A body of twenty or thirty persons waited upon the deputy commissioner of police in Madras, and said they wanted work; they had had no food for days, they wanted means to earn a living. They were referred to the collector of Chingleput, but they replied that Mr. Barlow had been seen, and he said he had no works to send them to. Prices also remained abnormally high. When the rains fell in September, 1877, imports ceased. Food stocks could not be replenished from the fields in the Presidency, for they, instead of being 'white unto harvest,' were withered and dying. 'The very land seemed curst.'

Such was the situation in February. Soon after, particulars were published of sore distress which was the necessary consequence of such a state of things as is described above.

The following carefully authenticated story will serve to show the ravages of disease induced by want in 1878. Three women (sisters) had married three brothers, and they and their families all lived in one large house, Hindu and patriarchal fashion. The whole household, on January 1, 1878, numbered forty-eight persons. Their crops failed, their money was gone, their credit was *nil*. They tried to live on seeds, leaves, &c., and, as a consequence, cholera attacked them, and thirty died from this disease. Fifteen others expired

from what a relative called 'cold fever,' and in April only three persons remained. A sister of the three women heard of their distress, and in March started on a journey of one hundred miles, alone, with money and medicine, to succour her relatives, but the news had reached her too late. On her return she reported that in the same village in which her sisters lived twelve whole families had died and their houses were empty.

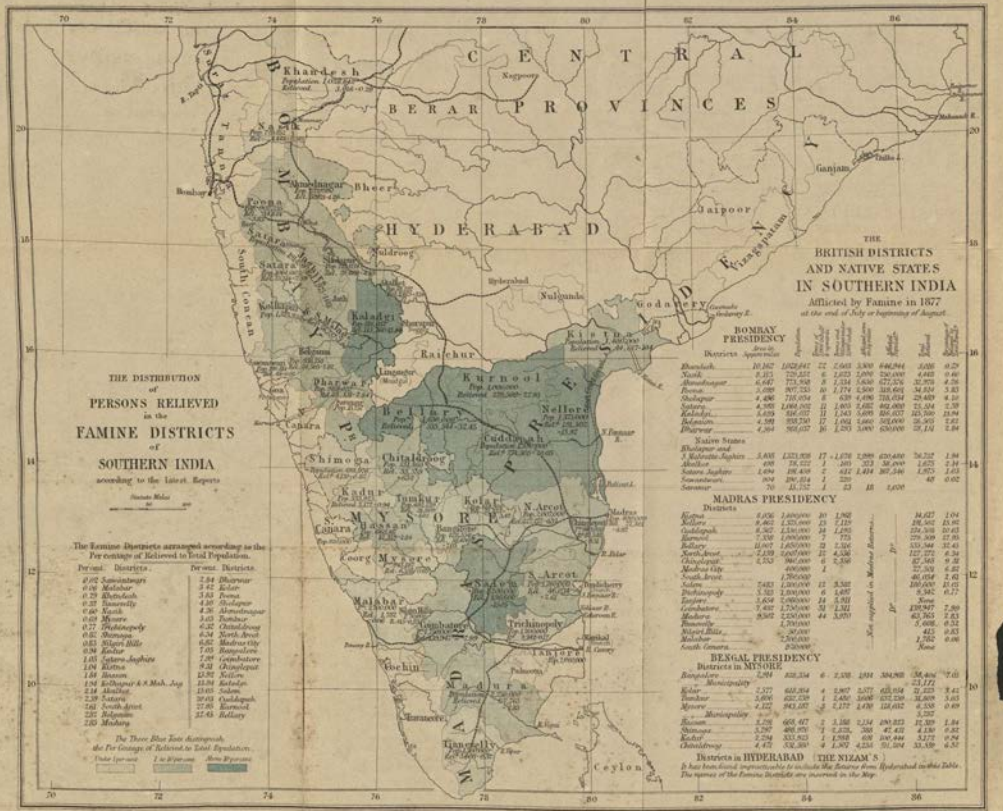
Careful examination of agricultural returns showed that two millions and a half acres less than the average were under cultivation. This may be taken as the measure of loss Government is likely to suffer for many years to come in a diminished land revenue.

In March a partial census was taken, revealing a most terrible mortality. In some places twenty-five, in one thirty per cent. of the people had died.

In the month of April it was found that fears had been exaggerated. The condition of the people, and the quantity of crop reaped, proved better than had been expected. Sir Michael Kennedy estimated the cost to the end of distress at fifty lakhs of rupees, and hoped the south-west monsoon would wash away all traces of the distress which had extended over a period of nearly two years. Seasonal prospects were favourable; the signs of the weather cheering. The Government of Madras proceeded to the Blue Mountains on pleasure bent in April, and all fear of long-continued distress was dismissed from the official forecast.

Honours were gazetted to the more meritorious officers connected with the famine on May 24, 1878. Mr. Stewart Bayley was made a Knight Commander of the Star of India; Colonel Drever, Mr. J. H. Garstin, Mr. R. Davidson, Mr. C. A. Elliott, Major Scott-Moncrieff, and the Hon. James Gibbs, were made Companions of the Star of India.

BOMBAY



THE DISTRIBUTION
of
PERSONS RELIEVED
in the
FAMINE DISTRICTS
of
SOUTHERN INDIA
according to the latest Reports

Statute Miles

The Famine Districts arranged according to the Per centage of Relieved to Total Population.

Per cent.	Districts.	Per cent.	Districts.
0·07	Sawantwarry	1·34	Dharwar
0·09	Malabar	1·45	Belgaum
0·29	Khandesh	1·85	Poona
0·37	Tinnevelly	4·30	Sholapoor
0·46	Nasik	4·36	Ahmednagar
0·69	Mysore	5·03	Dumbaur
0·77	Chittledroog	6·35	Chittledroog
0·85	Shimoga	6·54	North Arcot
0·85	Nilgiri Hills	6·85	Madras city
0·94	Kadur	7·05	Bangalore
1·05	Satara Jaghire	7·09	Coimbatore
1·06	Kistna	9·31	Chingleput
1·18	Beejapoor	12·91	Salem
1·24	Kolhapoor & S. Mah. Jag.	13·36	Kolar
1·24	Madura	13·65	Salem
1·39	Satara	20·63	Cuddapah
1·51	South Arcot	27·65	Karnool
1·21	Belgaum	37·45	Bellary
1·25	Madura		

The Three Blue Tints distinguish the Per Centage of Relieved to Total Population.

Under 1 per cent. | 1 to 10 per cent. | Above 10 per cent.

THE
BRITISH DISTRICTS
AND NATIVE STATES
IN SOUTHERN INDIA
Afflicted by Famine in 1877
at the end of July or beginning of August.

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

Districts.	Population.	Area in Square Miles.	Relieved.	Per Centage of Relieved to Total Population.
Khandesh	16,10,617	10,525	4,66,944	29·00
Nasik	8,16,719	3,773	3,80,000	46·52
Ahmednagar	6,67,773	6,658	2,60,000	38·93
Poona	9,07,753	5,319	1,68,000	18·50
Sholapur	4,46,715	4,476	2,03,000	45·44
Satara	8,58,000	4,484	2,00,000	23·31
Kaladgi	5,69,456	6,022	2,65,000	46·53
Belgaum	9,07,753	4,694	2,65,000	29·19
Dharwar	4,30,715	4,476	2,03,000	47·14

Native States

Districts.	Population.	Area in Square Miles.	Relieved.	Per Centage of Relieved to Total Population.
Bhaunagar and S. Mahratta Jaghire	3,46,000	2,000	20,000	5·78
Akalkot	4,000	1	500	12·50
Satara Jaghire	1,00,000	2	1,000	1·00
Sawantwari	3,00,000	1	200	0·07
Savanur	11,000	1	15	0·13

MADRAS PRESIDENCY

Districts.	Population.	Area in Square Miles.	Relieved.	Per Centage of Relieved to Total Population.
Kistna	8,00,000	10	1,000	14,627	1·04
Nellore	8,00,000	13	1,125	16,562	15·05
Cuddapah	8,00,000	13	1,125	234,562	20·83
Karnool	7,00,000	7	875	229,500	27·35
Bellary	7,00,000	12	1,500	333,500	22·45
North Arcot	2,00,000	15	4,500	127,272	6·34
Chittledroog	2,00,000	9	2,500	67,563	9·31
Madras city	400,000	1		37,500	6·25
South Arcot	1,00,000			60,054	2·42
Salem	7,00,000	13	3,500	300,000	12·63
Trichinopoly	5,00,000	6	1,687	8,582	0·17
Tanjore	1,00,000	24	6,000	None	
Coimbatore	9,00,000	24	1,341	139,947	7·99
Madura	8,00,000	44	3,000	63,765	2·63
Tinnevelly	1,00,000			5,608	0·51
Malabar	2,00,000			415	0·03
Nilgiri Hills	30,000			1,762	0·06
South Canara	2,00,000			None	

BENGAL PRESIDENCY
Districts in MYSORE

Districts.	Population.	Area in Square Miles.	Relieved.	Per Centage of Relieved to Total Population.
Bangalore	5,00,000	6	1,500	1,931	384,908	38,404	7·65
Municipality						23,171	
Kolar	5,00,000	6	1,500	2,577	625,958	31,253	5·45
Tumkur	5,00,000	6	1,500	1,500	572,000	31,000	5·63
Mysore	4,00,000	6	1,500	1,470	558,000	6,500	0·69
Municipality						5,000	
Hassan	5,00,000	6	1,500	1,134	280,223	10,309	1·84
Shimoga	5,00,000	6	1,500	1,500	47,425	4,150	0·82
Kadur	5,00,000	6	1,500	600	100,000	5,272	0·94
Chittledroog	4,00,000	6	1,500	1,134	91,500	33,500	6·51

Districts in HYDERABAD | THE NIZAM'S

It has been found impracticable to include the Returns from Hyderabad in this Table.
The names of the Famine Districts are inserted on the Map.

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BOMBAY.

CHAPTER I.

THE DISASTER FACED AND FOUGHT SUCCESSFULLY.

'The country is an absolute desert. Not a blade of grass nor a particle of grain is to be seen anywhere. The rivers and wells are drying up, and the cattle are dying of absolute starvation. The people are looking very thin and ill, and though there have been no deaths from starvation, it is very evident that something must speedily be done to alleviate the distress.'—*District Report by Bombay Official.*

'The scene as I watch it from my waggon is curious enough. A plain as flat as a desert, and its dark brown earth—for the soil has changed now—as barren, the monotony of the sky line only broken by an occasional and sparsely foliaged neem tree. All along the two miles in progress, men are hewing and digging lazily as their nature or this sultry clime compels. Gangs of women abreast or afile are stalking statuesquely with basket on head, and often a little child by the hand, or on the hip, going to and fro with the soft moorum, or friable stone with which the road is metalled. The whole scene is intensely Egyptian. But there are no scourge-armed taskmasters here. Incidentally the road has to be made—and so the benefits of this wretched famine will be felt hereafter—but the object kept steadily in view is the support of human life, and the only Sphinx hereabouts erected can be unriddled by the one moral—Charity.'—*Special Correspondent, Times of India.*

THE hot weather retreat of the Government of Bombay in August 1876 was disturbed by a visit at the end of the month from Mr. Grant, collector of Sholapur. Mr. Grant proceeded to Poona to personally report to Government the fact that, owing to want of rain, much distress would be likely to ensue in the greater portion

of his collectorate. Similar ill-tidings came from other districts lying north and south of Sholapur, extending indeed over nearly the whole length of the Presidency. The Government at once faced the difficulty; they set to work to estimate its intensity and extent, and directed all collectors to forward to them weekly reports regarding the weather and the crops. At Sholapur matters first assumed a serious aspect, and on September 4 an allotment was made to Mr. Grant to commence relief works.

Distress did not manifest itself very quickly; rain fell in small quantities over restricted areas, and raised hopes which proved fallacious. Sir Philip Wodehouse, the Governor, and the members of his Council, however, did not permit themselves to be deceived by the partial showers, but set to work vigorously to meet the disaster which was clearly impending. Frequent conferences were held during September and the early part of October, in which various policies for meeting famine were discussed. Evidence, as exemplified in plans adopted and arguments used in course of disputes which afterwards arose, shows that the procedure adopted in previous times of famine was carefully examined. What had been done by Sir (then Mr.) John Strachey, in the North-West Provinces in 1868 was most carefully pondered, while the action of Lord Northbrook and Sir George Campbell in 1874 was had in minute review. The determination come to on several points was wise and judicious. Sir Philip Wodehouse, who hitherto had not struck the people he ruled with overwhelming evidence of his capacity to successfully meet a crisis, recognised what was demanded of him, and at once took upon himself the management of famine affairs, paying his councillors the courtesy of adopting no important change without discussing it with one or

other of them. One of his colleagues subsequently referred to Sir Philip Wodehouse's devotion and zeal thus: 'The details I have briefly sketched show very fairly what must have been the amount of anxiety, careful thought, and constant labour, which by his own choice fell to the share of Sir Philip Wodehouse; for however much he might have felt relief from taking counsel with his colleagues, and however much his work was lightened through the able assistance of General Kennedy, it must be borne in mind that the responsibility of the measures taken and which are now admittedly to form the rules to be applied in future times of scarcity or dearth, really lay on him; and to him, therefore, is the credit due. I may, I hope, be allowed to bear testimony to the constancy and the earnestness which he threw into the work; and at the same time to express my belief that very few men, especially men of his years, could have conducted the affairs of such a crisis in so satisfactory a manner.'[1]

The first matter considered was with regard to the purchase of grain by Government. It was, after full discussion, determined that Government might safely leave to private trade to do all that was needed; and although the Government were strongly urged to depart from this policy, they firmly and consistently adhered to it with entirely satisfactory results. In weighing the matter, the Government considered that any decided movement on their part would be likely to act prejudicially on trade, that if the merchants were led to expect that they would be subjected to the competition of the Government they would withdraw; and as it was clear that, no matter how powerful the Government might be, and on however extended a scale their efforts might be made, they could not hope

[1] Minute by the Honourable F. Gibbs, December 20, 1877.

to effect all that the trade, if it exerted itself, could do, it was held that it would be better for Government not to enter into the market at all; for though the Government might be able to do more than many merchants could do, they could not hope to effect so much as would be done by all of them. It was, therefore, with as little delay as possible, publicly made known that Government would not in any way interfere with the grain trade, or with the movements of grain, unless actually forced to do so by failure of supply or by excessive extortion on the part of dealers; that they would buy nothing on their own account for importation into the affected districts, though they were ready to enter into contracts for the delivery on their own works of food supplies to their own labourers; that, in fact, they were not prepared to do more than to act through the trade on behalf of those who came upon their relief works; and that they would not in any way themselves assume the position of traders or importers, so long as they could ensure the people on the works being supplied with food.[1] The event, as will be seen later on, amply justified the Government in the course they adopted.

One other resolution was come to by the Bombay Government which was of the utmost importance, and which served to show how admirably they had forecast the needs of the time. This was, that, whenever practicable, persons requiring assistance should be employed on relief works of considerable magnitude, such as had been well examined and found satisfactory in all respects, and which would prove eventually useful, while isolated works of a trifling nature should as far as possible form exceptions to this rule. As a means of providing aid for those who could not work, from infirmity or old age, each collector was granted a lump sum of 25,000 rs.

[1] Note I. by General Sir M. K. Kennedy, R.E., Secretary to the Bombay Government, Public Works Department.

These preparations were not made a day too soon. The state of the country may be judged from certain official reports which give most melancholy accounts of the condition of things. The collector of Sholapur in his letter of October 4 reports: 'There is now no part of the district in which the condition of the mass of the people is not most deplorable; and as there is no prospect of any crop whatever throughout by far the greater portion of the collectorate, there can be no doubt that a scarcity amounting to famine must be the result.' The collector of Poonah, writing on the 10th instant, said: 'For the first few miles beyond Poonah the crops are still in the ground, but they are rapidly drying up, and unless rain falls, cannot expect to yield any grain. They are now being cut for forage.' Beyond that distance the country is an absolute desert, not a blade of grass nor a particle of grain is to be seen anywhere. The rivers and wells are drying up, and the cattle are dying of absolute starvation. The people are looking very thin and ill, and though there have been no deaths from starvation, it is very evident that something must speedily be done to alleviate the distress.' The revenue commissioner and the superintending engineer, who had been specially ordered by Government to report on the distressed districts, writing from Ahmednagar on the 10th instant, after passing through the Bhimthari taluk of the Poona district, reported: 'We are about to proceed to the Sholapur collectorate; but we are already so impressed with the excessive character of the drought in those parts seen by us, and we are so fully convinced from various circumstances, and especially from the communications of the collector of Sholapur, Mr. Grant, that our visit there will bring before us a still worse and more universally-spread calamity, that we should consider ourselves to blame in delaying to lay the very

serious nature of the case before Government, and to apply at once for relief works on a large scale.' Of the Sinnar taluk, having 103 villages, with a population of 64,872 souls, Mr. Charles, the assistant in charge, wrote: 'I have now seen a great part of the south of Sinnar, and the worst impressions have been fully confirmed. The rain of September 25 and 28 did not extend more than a few miles east of Sinnar (except in two villages where showers fell on the Nagar border). It is therefore certain that no rabi can be sown in all the eastern half of the taluk. This of itself means the loss of one-fourth of all the crops. Bajri is now being reaped, and though nearly in every village there are some good fields, with an out-turn of perhaps eight or nine annas, the great majority of all the fields are not two feet high, with the stalks yellow, and what little grain there is small and imperfectly developed. The out-turn of these I should put at about four annas, while there are numbers of fields and parts of fields where there is no grain at all, and the stalks only a few inches high. The people are becoming very importunate. Yesterday large bodies of Kunbis, from six or eight villages, came to my tent demanding remissions, and asking what arrangements were to be made to feed them.

'I was obliged to tell them I had no authority to promise any remissions, and at this they were angry and even insolent. One set of people, after coming up three or four times and getting the same answer, went away, and were heard by my peons to say that they would take an opportunity of knocking the sahib (*i.e.* myself) on the head, and then perhaps Government would pay attention to their condition. I do not fear that they will carry out their threats, but mention the matter that you may understand what their temper is.

'I think that it is highly desirable Government

should make some distinct promise as to the revenue, and then the people could either leave their crops and seek work, or use them to feed cattle with. As it is, they are afraid to leave their villages for fear of being called upon to pay revenue and having their occupancies sold up. I think from what I have seen that no revenue at all can be collected this year from the eastern half of Sinnar, and what I should propose is that the people should be told this as soon as possible, and informed that whatever proportion of the revenue may be finally settled upon as leviable, will be collected not this year but the next.'

An interesting glimpse of how the distress appeared to the native mind is contained in a series of letters published in the Famine Blue Book, No. I. The letters were from the subordinate judge of Tasgaon, Khan Sahib Maherzibhai Kuvarzi by name. Though it was, as he said, no part of his duty, he considered himself bound as a public servant to bring to the collector's notice the 'very great suffering' of the cultivating and other population of the taluk. 'The crops being low, every person dreams of a famine.' 'The grain bazaar is getting dearer and dearer every day. There are two bazaar days in this town, Monday and Thursday. On Thursday before last,' he writes on October 3, 1876, 'the rate of grain was suddenly reduced by the merchants from 3 to 2 "pailis" for the rupee. And even at this dear rate many persons were unable to get any grain in the bazaar. I had to assemble all the grain merchants in one place and persuade them to have mercy on the poor sufferers, and not to mind much about their profits. The consequence is, that the same rate is retained for the last three bazaars, and the practice of the merchants of this place of buying in lump the grain that comes from out-stations and then selling it

in retail on profits has been discontinued for a time, to enable the poor to buy it from the out-station merchants directly at a cheaper rate. But I humbly submit that if the state of rain remains the same the bazaar will not retain its present state for many days.' 'The people,' he said, 'had no grain in store, and the soucars had ceased to lend money. Whole classes had become "supportless." It is horrible to describe how many cattle they have lost. Many are obliged to abandon their cattle for being unable to feed them. For the last week I have been hearing of instances in which people are actually starving; some living on vegetables only. Many people have become desperate, and it has, therefore, become a dangerous thing for a man to go from one place to another without apprehending the danger of being plundered on the road. The other day a witness who appeared to give evidence before me complained of his being plundered by two men and deprived of the only two breads he had for himself. Many such instances have come to my knowledge, and I have taken the utmost care to see that the statements are not exaggerated.'

Writing a few days after, the same gentleman said: 'Yesterday morning also some 25 men of the village of Erandole came and complained about the same things as above stated. They say that their calamity has reached to such a height that they cannot suffer any longer; that they cannot see their children starve before their faces, and that the last thing that remains for them to do would be to throw their children into wells, and then do whatever they would be compelled to do under the present hard circumstances. . . . The police force here is comparatively too small to confront any such attempt from the desperate people. Several minor thefts and housebreakings have already been committed

for the last few days. Mangs and Mokars are occasionally seen wandering in the town at unusual hours, and when they are asked the reason of their doing so, they plainly say they are starving, and so wandering for bread. While I was writing the above, about 60 men of the village of Visapur came and complained about the same thing. It has now become a difficult thing to console such people.'

It was calculated about the middle of October that the number of persons who might have to be relieved in the three Deccan districts, Poona, Ahmednagar, and Sholapur, would amount to about 220,000, and that continued relief or employment would have to be found for them for eight months ; adding the probable number that would require relief in the other six affected districts, it was not safe to reckon that a less average number than between 400,000 and 500,000 persons would require support in some shape during the period up to the next monsoon, perhaps until the next harvest. Assuming that the failure of crops had not been less serious in the Deccan and Southern Mahratta country than it had been in Bengal in 1874 (it was really more serious), and taking as a basis the proportions adopted on that occasion, it was afterwards calculated that relief might have to be given at the worst season to about one million of people, *i.e.*, to 20 per cent. of the population of the affected districts, and a rough approximate estimate was made of the outlay that would devolve on the Government, amounting to 1,400,000*l*. At first, *i.e.*, in September and part of October, the Government endeavoured to meet the case by the application of the resources within their own command, by using the provincial and local funds, and by anticipating to some extent the local resources of the ensuing year; but it soon became apparent that these efforts would

only to a very small extent meet the exigencies of the case. Many small and scattered works had been undertaken in the period, but about the middle of October it became clear that, if the difficulty was to be met at all, far more serious and extensive operations must be set on foot. It was the opinion of the Government that to deal properly with the crisis in a manner that would ensure the object in view, viz., the profitable employment of the people, and the avoidance as far as practicable of waste of public funds, it was necessary to set on foot works on which large bodies of men could be concentrated, supplied with food, and properly organised and controlled. This view was in accordance with the ruling of the Government of India, laid down in the 12th paragraph of the Resolution No. 1—59-71, dated February 18, 1875, where it is expressly enjoined that at an early stage of distress 'large works shall be opened at once, small local works subsequently, as the necessity for them arises.'

Acting on this principle, the Bombay Government proposed to the Government of India the commencement of the earthworks of the contemplated railway between Dhond and Manmád—a work which, from its circumstances and surroundings, was recommended to the Government by their officers as specially adapted for affording relief. The proposal was not approved by the Government of India on grounds of general policy, and the Bombay Government at once accepted the decision that was communicated to them. With this work fell also a similar work which the Government had intended to commence for the relief of the Southern Mahratta Country, *i.e.*, that portion of the Karwar and Bellary Railway which lies within the Dharwar collectorate.[1]

[1] Note by Lieutenant-General Sir Michael K. Kennedy, K.C.S.I.

The local Government had been informed by the Government of India, in their letter of October 25, that they had 'no desire to impose upon the Bombay Government any restrictions beyond those which are afforded by the experience of the past, as authoritatively recorded by the Government of India,' and that they had 'the fullest confidence that his Excellency the Governor in Council will exercise the discretion vested in him so as to prevent any loss of the lives of her Majesty's subjects, without incurring any expenditure of public money in excess of the necessities of the case.' Believing that a discretionary power had been thus granted to them, the Bombay Government proceeded, under the advice of their responsible officers, to draw out a programme, on a fixed and intelligible principle, of several large operations, both road and irrigation works, the works being so disposed as to provide for each affected district; but when this programme was submitted to the Government of India, objections were taken in detail by the President in Council to several of the proposed works; it was ordered that no work should be commenced in the Irrigation Department likely to cost more than 30,000 rs., without the previous sanction of the Government of India, and the local Government were given to understand that, by the tenor of the orders passed, before any large work could be undertaken, it would be necessary to establish sometimes the necessity for it as a relief work, sometimes its general merits as a necessary improvement. A correspondence then commenced which was not terminated for some months, and which, from an administrative point of view, was so important that it will be found dealt with separately in a subsequent chapter; but the Bombay Government were compelled by the necessities of the case to commence several of the works which were

prohibited by the Government of India, feeling sure that, when the subject had been more fully considered by that authority, their action in this respect would be approved, and that it would be seen and admitted that they could not have acted otherwise without incurring very grave responsibility, or without possibly endangering the lives of her Majesty's subjects.

The course of events may be anticipated somewhat by stating here that, early in November, Sir Philip Wodehouse proposed to his Council a measure by which the whole correspondence connected with the matter of relief in the famine districts was removed to the charge of the Secretary of the Public Works Department. This decision, which Mr. Gibbs says was unanimously arrived at, was based principally on the fact that the great preponderance of the work would naturally be dealt with by that department. The change was a wise one, as the Governor thereby secured as his lieutenant General Kennedy, R.E. From the commencement to the end of Sir Philip Wodehouse's connection with the famine, as afterwards under the government of Sir Richard Temple, General Kennedy's firmness, energy, and readiness of resource were of the utmost possible value to the State.[1]

Although in the earliest of what may be called the famine resolutions the subject of the amount of food per head was considered, and, on an average, 1 lb. of grain per diem was then, viz., in October 1876, taken as the foundation for assessing the cost of the famine, yet by the first orders the rate of wages on relief works was fixed at

2 annas for a man,
1½ annas for a woman, and
1 anna for a boy or girl capable of work.

Subsequently, a sliding scale was authorised, by

[1] Minute by the Honourable Mr. Gibbs.

which the rate of wages increased when the staple food-grain became dearer than 16 lbs. to the rupee. Mr. Gibbs remarks in his minute that this system was so far perfect that in a family composed of adults and children both over and under 7 years of age, every member, even the youngest child, received a proportionate allowance. This is an opinion which was most strongly combated by many parties, both at the time and during many months after.

Generally speaking, the Bombay Government was prepared for a campaign against famine, and ready to meet the onset of the disaster in perfect square. Sir Philip Wodehouse and General Kennedy had forecasted the future, if not with absolute accuracy, yet with a great approach thereto; they had hold of all the strings of administration, and could take such action as was necessary at once. There was no uncertainty and no limpness. The proof of this was generally manifest, but was specially afforded in the decided action which placed the Revenue Department—the chiefest rank in the Indian official forces—in the background, and the Public Works officers came to the front.

Bombay is politically and socially most active of the Presidencies of India. The nearest geographically to Great Britain, it most nearly approaches, in its institutions and in the public spirit of its people, an English community. As soon as the famine declared itself, the general public were swift to do their part in meeting the disaster. Public meetings were held in the chief cities, and most energetic efforts were made to bring private charity to bear upon the mass of suffering. Elsewhere[1] will be found instances of noble devotion on the part of individuals. Not only in respect to

[1] See Chapter II. in Section devoted to 'Private Charity in Famine Campaigns,' vol. ii.

philanthropic deeds were the people of the Bombay Presidency well to the fore, but politically also they were active. In Poona there is a permanent political institution, known as the Sarvajanik Sabha, *lit.* 'Public Association,' composed of the most intelligent members of the community. This body has done very good service at different times to the general public,[1] but none of its efforts were more deserving of respect and esteem than those made during the famine period. It deputed agents and correspondents to visit all parts of the distressed districts, and make enquiries into the condition of the people and the efficacy or non-efficacy of the arrangements made for relief. The results of the enquiries of the Sabha's agents were embodied in narratives which were submitted at regular periods to the Government. These form a consecutive description of the efforts made by the authorities to grapple with the disaster, and though, as might be expected, here and there faults of omission and commission were discerned and described, on the whole the Bombay Government comes out of the ordeal with much credit. The authorities did not always achieve success, but they worked throughout in such a manner as to deserve it.

The first of the Sabha's narratives was dated October 21, and in its introductory paragraph justified itself in the unusual course it was about to adopt by

[1] This will appear from the following extract:—'The resolution (regarding land assessment) of October 1874 was, however, so emasculated and explained away in its practical operation, that the noble promises it proclaimed melted in the fulfilment, and resulted in a paltry relief which came too late to be of any benefit. The ryots, beset with so many difficulties, committed last year many agrarian riots, which had to be put down forcibly in the interests of the public peace. The secret causes of this intense and growing wretchedness were formally enquired into by the Sabha, and the results were published in a pamphlet form in 1873. As a sequel to that investigation, the Sabha submitted this time last year a memorial on the subject of the agrarian riots, which were also formally enquired into by a special commission appointed by Government.'

the following remark: 'The information accessible to Government is limited to purely official sources, and is naturally very deficient in the particular and intimate knowledge which, at such times, is so sadly needed, but which is shut out to those whose range of vision necessarily embraces whole taluks or districts, and the Sabha feels that it would be wanting in its duty to Government and to the people if it did not supplement the official information with the details accessible only to those who, like the agents and correspondents deputed by the Sabha, live among and form part of the people overtaken by this calamity.' Contrary to what is the rule in all such cases in India, the Bombay Government welcomed the efforts of the Sabha, and, in a letter of acknowledgment written the same day that the narrative was received, the Secretary to Government said: 'I am directed to state . . . that Government will be very glad to receive the periodical information you propose to submit regarding the condition of the people in the drought-stricken districts of this Presidency.' The Sabha described the existing famine as the widest in extent and the most intense that had been known. Colonel Etheridge's report on the past famines in Bombay Presidency showed that none of the previously reported famines of 1792, 1803, 1804, 1818, 1824–25, 1830–33, 1845, and 1855, were so general and so thorough 'as the calamity which threatens the Deccan districts in the coming year. Some of these famines were confined to a few districts. Those of 1792, 1804, and 1847, though more general in their extent, were due not so much to the want of rain as to the political disturbances of the times which prevented the sowing of the crops. The famine of 1824 bears the nearest resemblance to the present season; even in that year, however, the long withheld rains fell on the Dusra day, and thus greatly

mitigated the calamity. This final mercy has been withheld this year, and the country is already in the jaws of a famine, not only of grain, but of drinking water and fodder for cattle.' The Sabha gave in its adherence to the principle of large works in most emphatic language. 'It was hoped at first that the crisis would be sufficiently met by commencing small relief works in different places out of local fund balances and re-appropriations, but this hope is no longer entertained by the district officers. The Sabha, from the first, never entertained such a hope, and all the reports received by the Sabha during the last month complain loudly of the insufficient and unsatisfactory nature of the help afforded by these small relief works. Many hundreds of people are reported to have sought for employment on these works, but had to return disappointed because the allotments were too small to provide for all who were willing to work on starvation wages. It was only the lowest of the low, the labouring classes pure and simple, and of these only small handfuls selected from different villages, who, by competing one another down in the scale of subsistence, obtained employment for a few days, and yet the aggregate number of workers was so greatly in excess of the work that the allotments were soon exhausted.'

The promotion of emigration to the Nizam's dominions and elsewhere was also strongly urged, but the Sabha soon came to see that little good would result from such an effort. Government were called upon to provide fodder for the cattle, which were dying in large numbers. The most astonishing part of this narrative, however—from a political economist's point of view, and considering that it emanated from a purely Indian Association—is the paragraph which supported the action of the Government in declining to purchase

grain. The Sabha say in that portion of their narrative: 'The disinclination of Government to take upon itself the traders' function of importing grain and selling it at moderate prices is justified by a wise foresight, and we feel no doubt that under proper regulations the contract system will work satisfactorily. If there is a combination among sellers to sell grain at exorbitant rates, it can be best counteracted by the action of private enterprise. Private charity supplemented by municipal advances in the large towns is the best agent for the undertaking of this work, and Government can legitimately help such efforts by exempting the grain so bought from the toll and octroi duties on condition that the grain was sold at the Neerahka rates, and by making arrangements with the railway companies to charge low rates upon the grain so imported. It is true the importation of grain and the opening of Government shops and the enforcement of Neerahka rates will all be very popular measures, and the Sabha has been repeatedly pressed to memorialise Government in this behalf, but, from a view of general consequences, it has systematically discouraged such a demand. Another equally popular measure would be the stopping of exportation of grain to foreign parts. Under present circumstances, however, such a measure is wholly uncalled for on general grounds, and the history of the Bengal famine shows that the Government of India is not likely to undertake this responsibility.'

The reports of the Sabha's agents are very interesting, and may be judged by excerpts from some of them, *e.g.*—'*Karmale*, October 14. Rainfall, 7 inches; last year, 23 inches. 30 inches required ordinarily for a good season. No grain stores. Assessment paid by borrowing money from creditors during the last three years. Khareef crops sown all burnt up; rubbi not

sown. Arable acres, 3½ lakhs in the taluk ; only 150 acres sown. Population, 1 lakh; 50,000 left the taluk. Of 120 villages, 6 are without inhabitants except the patel and koolkarnees (village officials). Most people left for Baleghaut. Out of 72,000 cattle and 59,000 sheep, 50,000 cattle and 20,000 sheep left the taluk. Those remaining not expected to live. Price of kurbee is from 30 rs. to 40 rs. The drinking water scarce, and expected to last till March. Grain, 11 or 12 seers; wheat, 9 seers. No robberies except in the village of Awati. Cattle fetch no price. Local works commenced, the cutting down of prickly bush near Jintee, and the construction of roads in the Shetful and Kurmale taluk ; the repair of the Suggar road. Of one lakh of the inhabitants, only but few thousands will find relief. The people possess no savings on account of heavy re-assessment imposed in 1873-74.' Again—' *Mohol*, October 10. Large works wanted. Wages insufficient. Price of grain, 6½ seers per rupee; twelve seers Neerahka wanted. Government should provide funds and grain by taking bonds from respectable but poor people who cannot work. Refund claimed of the heavy assessments which have been since reduced. Creditors are selfish. A dacoity took place on October 10, 1876, in the villages of Asta, in the Nizam's territory. Blind and infirm dying. Relief funds from foreign parts requested. A Gosawi committed suicide because the gods prayed to for rain did not send rain.'

During this period there were others besides the agents of the Sarvajanik Sabha engaged in spying the nakedness of the land. The Bombay daily newspapers are never wanting in enterprise, and both of them—the *Times of India* and the *Bombay Gazette*—sent members of their respective staffs to Sholapur, the centre of most suffering. The letters of the *Times of India* correspon-

dent created a sensation throughout the whole of India, and even in countries beyond. Some of the statements made were not quite accurate; but on the whole the representation made of the state of the country was fairly correct. There can be no doubt that at this time —early in November—and for some time after, a panic had seized the people, and nothing that the authorities could do availed to check the stampede from home and long familiar scenes which took place. Beyond providing works and giving gratuitous relief where possible, the authorities could do nothing, and were compelled to let the evil work its own cure. People who aimlessly wandered found they did not improve their position one whit by so doing, and in time the wandering ceased. Things, however, in the meanwhile came to a serious pass. Late in October in the district of Sholapur cattle were offered for sale at from two to four annas a head. In one village a cow was actually sold for a cake of jowaree. In the town itself the Hindus were forgetting their prejudices, and the butchers were busy slaughtering the beasts that were literally brought to them for nothing. On the river banks hard by the town two thousand Dhungars (or shepherds) were encamped with their flock of 4,000 goats, resting awhile in their long and weary flight from the famine pest. Hundreds and thousands of starving creatures had already fled into the Nizam's richer territory.[1]

The position of affairs in Sholapur on November 7 is thus described by Mr. Curwen, the correspondent referred to: 'I arrived here at four yesterday morning, and from sunrise to sunset we see nothing but people passing hopelessly through, driving a few miserable cattle and goats before them. On their heads the men carry the whole of their household goods, while the

[1] *Times of India*, October 23, 1876.

women march with their children at their breasts, on their shoulders or their hips. The majority have no idea whither they are going. They think the famine local, and hope to reach grass land and vegetation at last. But the plain around is as dry as the Arabian desert, and is covered with dust some three inches in depth, which occasionally drifts in clouds. It is sad to see the poor beasts lick at it in hopes of a stray blade of grass. The villages are becoming depopulated, one man being left in charge generally with a slight contribution of grain from each. They have no sale for their cattle here; they have no money, and scarcely any ornaments; one might almost say they have no food. Last night I walked round their encampments—if one may give such a name to the dry earth on which most of them lay in the cold night air. Scarcely any had fires; many had no food at all, but some were sitting round a pittance of raw grain, munching it like horses. Every effort is being made to get these people on to the famine relief works. Labourers join readily, but agriculturists drift on; and thus the Government are losing the tax-paying portion of the community. On Sunday, as I telegraphed yesterday, twenty-four people died of a species of cholera which would appear to have been induced by excessive hunger and bad old grain.[1]

[1] This statement in the telegram referred to appeared to intimate that the twenty-four people named had died of starvation *pur et simple*. The Bombay Government were prompt to defend themselves against permitting such deaths if possible, and believed they had provided against such a dire eventuality. One of the members of Council, Mr. Rogers, on the suggestion of the correspondent, was sent to Poona to see the exact state of affairs. Enquiries were made, and on November 10 a telegram was sent to the Supreme Government in the following terms:—'Collector of Sholapur reports officially, in reference to telegram of 6th instant from *Times of India* special correspondent, that not a single death from starvation is known to have occurred in the Sholapur district, and that he does not anticipate any such deaths will occur. The deaths that have occurred have been due to an outbreak of a choleraic type in a party employed on a relief work. Party has

This was at a relief work at Iyerwaddy, about four miles distant, where a road was in process of construction. The work was at once broken up. Three or four of the same gang died yesterday. The symptoms were violent vomiting and purging. One informant saw a man struggling towards Sholapur with a dying man on his back, who exhibited these symptoms as he was carried in this terribly uncomfortable way. Yesterday seven deaths were noted at the municipality, but this notation means nothing. Seven were noted to-day; five from starvation. Since I began this letter a girl died, not three hundred yards from where I am writing. A native called in to tell me at once, and I walked up with the unfortunate father. There they were sitting, a party of four men, two women, five children, and the dead girl close to the canal bank. They had none of them had any food for four days. They came from Begumpoor, only 18 miles away. When they got to the canal, they plunged their faces in, and the famishing girl died as soon as she had drunk. Her name was

been broken up, and people transferred to other works and all precautions taken.' The collector, in response to enquiry wrote, 'All the deaths reported in the telegram of November 6 in the *Times of India* occurred amongst the workpeople on the Sholapur-Ahirwarri road, most of whom have been employed for the last six weeks on various other relief works in the Sholapur taluk, and transferred from them, from time to time, to that road as occasions required. It stands to reason, therefore, that persons who had been fed regularly for many weeks past could not have been in a starving condition when this outbreak of sickness occurred. Upwards of fifty deaths occurred on one part of the Ahirwarri road at one time, and all of them are attributable to the same cause and are to be explained as follows:—Finding that grain goes farther than jowaree, some of the workpeople provided themselves with it in the place of jowaree, which they have always been in the habit of using, and after eating it uncooked, drank water, the result being a kind of choleraic bowel complaint, which carried them off very rapidly; but as soon as the outbreak occurred, the people were taken off that work and transferred to other road work. This is the first serious outbreak that has taken place up to the present time among 40,000 workpeople, and I trust that by exercising proper caution as to the food they eat, a recurrence of it will be averted.'

Koolsum, and even dead she looked a pretty, well-grown girl. They were all Mahomedans, and said they could "get no work" that would not enforce a weary waiting. And this is the meaning of that phrase. There is a road relief work running from Begumpoor, but it is under the Public Works Department, and the restrictions in time of famine have killed that poor girl, and almost killed the lot of them. A pretty relief work! They were all dying of starvation. . . . To the ryots their cattle are their sole wealth, and this they are now giving away if any can be found to take. On Tuesday 700 were forcibly driven into the Sholapur Mills compound, and there deserted. It is impossible to receive any more. There is a man now working on those mills who drove in his 24 head of cattle the other day. The market price was two annas. He begged them to take them altogether. "They were my fortune, and what are three rupees?" he said. "Let me work at the building." So this man, who occupied the position of a respectable farmer, is doing common coolie's work. This morning I spent some time in the Tuesday's cattle market. There were perhaps some 1,500 or 2,000 head. But people scarcely care even to drive them a few hundred yards into the market. There are no buyers but butchers, who buy them for two or three annas, solely for their skin. A lecture last week was given by a pleader, inciting the people against the butchers. "The cow," he argued, "is our mother. When we leave our mother the cow supports us. She gives us milk, and she gives us ghee, the only relishable food of our vegetarian diet, and to others she gives meat; and the butchers are killing off all the cows for the sake of the hides alone." A raid was made on the unfortunate butchers, and they were driven out of the town.'

'Mr. Grant, the collector of Sholapur, is doing all

that man could do to lessen the distress.[1] When the crisis was at its height it was reported that he would be removed on promotion to another district. On the people hearing he was going, they all said they would go too, and I dare say they would like to do so. They all call him the Damaji Punt, and for this reason. Long years ago there was a revenue officer of this name under the Nizam. There was a famine, and the starving people came and stood before his window as he dined, and he got up and without any orders he went out and opened the State granaries—for the taxes were all paid in grain then—and saved their lives. But as he had no authority he was arrested and thrown into prison, and at his trial a Mahar, a man of the poorest, lowest caste, stepped forward and paid the 10,000 rs. that were wanting to refill the granary. But after the money was paid none would tell who this Mahar was, for he was only an angel in disguise. But the name of Damaji Punt has lived long in the land like the name of Arthur in England, and the name of King Sebastian in Portugal, till the people almost think he has come back in the person of Mr. Grant.'

One further passage from the communications of the same correspondent may be quoted for the interesting details which it furnishes:—

'Relief Works, Begumpore Road, Nov. 9.

'I am writing this in an uncomfortable kind of Noah's ark upon wheels, which has been drawn so far by bul-

[1] The special correspondent of the *Statesman* says:—'A single hour in Sholapur is enough to make anyone wonder that deaths from starvation are not the order of the day; yet so hearty are the exertions with which the distress is met that no death has occurred, nor is likely to occur, except from circumstances which are simply beyond control. I have already given one cause of a very few cases of starvation which might doubtless be prevented if a Napoleon were in Mr. Grant's place; but occasional cases occur, chiefly of children, among people who come in from the outlying taluks so famished that they are past recovery, even although they go straight to the dispensary or the collector's bungalow.'

locks, for I sent a pair on early in the morning to wait for me half way. To begin with, I will merely give an exact copy of the notes taken upon that jolting pilgrimage, and so tell you precisely what I saw.

'10.15 A.M.—Left Sholapur.

'10.20.—Passed the remains of the encampment about which I telegraphed you yesterday. I at that time went carefully round and questioned every party. You must take my spelling of names as I could pick it up, and you must remember that my matter comes from my informants, not from me. The first group came from a place forty miles off, in the Sangola taluk. There were fifteen men, twenty-four women, ten children, and twelve cattle, of which latter two had died on the road. They were going to the Nizam's territory, and said they knew nothing of relief works. Second group from Booa, Sangola taluk; eighteen men, twenty-two women, eighteen children, and six cattle. No deaths. They were going to the Nizam's territory, and said they knew nothing of relief works. Third group from Baliawady, in Mangoli taluk, twenty-eight miles off. There were eight men, four women, five children, and one cow. One man died on the way. These were going to the Nizam's territory unless they found work; they knew nothing of relief works. Fourth group from Watwata, Sholapur taluk, fourteen miles off. There were four men, six women, and sixteen children. The son of the eldest man had died three days since, and they had no cattle left. Were going to Nizam's territory; knew nothing of relief works. Fifth group from some place —my note is here illegible—16 miles off, in the Babool-gaum taluk. There were six men, five women, six children, and no cattle. They had been working at the Iyerwaddy relief works, but two of their number had died and the rest were frightened and so wandered on.

'The replies were given in chorus. So long as they have any cattle left these people will not "know of relief works." I quote them merely to show how this sparsely peopled country, only 170 of population to the square mile, is moving almost objectlessly about.

'To resume my journey, of course I leave out the ordinary village to village traffic, and the people who were wandering in the fields away from the roads.

'10.30.—Party of forty-eight persons, with a few cattle and goats, going from Heeraz, five miles off, to the Nizam's territory.

'10.35.—Party of twelve persons, with about 150 cattle, and a bullock waggon of household goods, going from Punderpur to Nizam's territory. Their beasts were the most wretched I have seen yet, such lean kine as Pharaoh never dreamt of, with ribs starting so visibly through their hides as to make one think they were the skins of striped zebras.

'10.40.—Crossed the canal; some forty women engaged on relief works in clearing away the weeds.

'10.50.—A small field of sugar-cane, watered from canal; but cattle have been turned in to graze on their valuable crop.

'11.—Mud-built village of Degum, each hovel looking like a dust heap, and a cloud of dust over all. Am told that, though near Sholapur, it is half deserted.

'11.5.—Cross an overflowing from the canal, and find about 1,000 persons engaged on road relief works under the Public Works Department. Hundreds crowd up to say they cannot get employment; the timekeeper is away, and there is universal grumbling at the two annas as insufficient, and all deductions made from payment; but as only the discontented speak I don't think much of that.

'11.15.—One waggon load with household goods and fifteen people coming from Bardee; they are going

to Sholapur to look for work. The fields here, though barren as ever, have been sown, but uselessly.

'11.20.—Another small relief work of 200.

'11.25.—Seven strong men with tools on their shoulders looking for work.

'11.30.—One field of jowaree watered from canal; the only one so far.

'11.35.—Band of one man, three women, seven children, with a bullock laden with chattels, looking for work.

'11.43.—Clump of green mango trees and a field of sugarcane intact, round a well of good water. Here I pass about a score of men who say they can get no work.

'11.47.—Flock of seventy sheep and two men from beyond Hinwar, and herd of sixteen cattle and five people, all going to Nizam's territory.

'11.50.—Nine men from Begumpur, their chattels and tools with them, looking for work.

'11.55.—A clump of green neem trees and a field of jowaree and a field of pulse, watered from the well. Pass seven persons who are bringing a calf and a goat—poor creatures—for sale anywhere.

'About noon the sun came out and the traffic stopped for a little. All the morning the clouds, big with deceitful waters that never came, had hung over the district. These heavy barren clouds are a feature of the scenery here. But now the sun beats down with a hot glaring heat, fiercer far than at Bombay. Under the earth heaps and the scanty tree shades groups of travel-worn wanderers and tired cattle are resting—longing for the promised land of green plenty, and one can scarcely help thinking of the truth of that simile, "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

'But at 12.25 we meet with a man, his wife, five children, and their goods, coming from Waghowlee, 10

miles off, to look for work ; and seven from Punderpur, with a laden bullock, on the same errand. Here too we pass a train of waggons bearing grain to relief works.

'12.37.—We come to the walled village of Teera, and cross the bed of the Tenna (?) river. There is only a ford 30 yards wide left here now, but as we cross the ford we see the rope or cable by which, in rains, the ferry boat is guided, 35 feet above our heads. The village is said to be more than half deserted, but there is quite a population in the river, which we hear comes from the relief works while the meal hour is going on. Coming out of the ford we bait our bullocks, and there is such a flocking round of hungry-eyed urchins to stare at the grain.

'Breasting the slight hill on the other side we meet the opposite villages of Singolee and Turugaum, and turning round by the last we come to the beginning of the great Begumpur relief works. This will run on for 10 miles ; the first 2 miles are in progress. The people were resting for their two hours of dinner as I drove through, and this gave me time for some conversation with the native inspector.

'There are about 3,500 people employed, who are in theory, but not in practice, supposed to belong to this taluk. The men receive 2 annas a day ; women 1½ annas ; children above ten, 1 anna. From the enquiries I have made, I have no hesitation in saying that this wage, at the present price of grain, is miserably insufficient. I was taking notes, and the people saw this and flocked round, hundreds of them with the same story, that they never "get enough" to eat. The fact is notorious through the district, and from what I indirectly hear, I believe the Government officers are of my opinion. Still this first great Government work I have visited leaves a most favourable impression. No one who

knows how to come here—and till one examines these unfortunate Mahrattas, one cannot fathom their depth of crass ignorance—is rejected, and no more work is expected than the physique of the labourer warrants. There is no pay for children below 10, but from to-morrow they are all to be fed with boiled rice at the cost of Government—for it is easy to see that these are Government works—and with milk, if it can be provided. They begin at 6 in the morning and work on till 12; then resting for two hours, they begin again at 2 and go on till sunset. They sleep and live on the ground, or in the jungle, and the clothing of the women is already miserably insufficient, yet the children seem merry as can be, and the native inspector would tell you that there are children enough. The Government have opened a grain shop; the people are paid and asked how much grain they will have; no one is allowed more than half a seer for individual use. The grain is cheaper than at Sholapur, though of Jubbulpur or poor quality only, for the price remains steadily at $5\frac{3}{4}$ seers to the rupee, $\frac{1}{2}$ a seer above our rate. It is wholesome enough, and bulk is a great thing. So far they are all low caste people; I had one character written in French thrust into my hands; the bearer for many years had been a trusted body servant in Port Louis, and carried a most glowing testimonial about his almost naked person. Now he is trying to escape from his 2 annas a day.'

Among the minor incidents of the period was that of a man who fell down on the point of death outside the dispensary, 'but Dr. Narsapa Goorapa could not take him in, as the disease of starvation was not on his list. However, he relaxed his rule, but not as a precedent.' [1]

[1] Letter to the Secretary of the Sholapur Relief Fund.

Very early in the famine a victim was demanded from among the European officials, and the sacrifice of life was offered up. Mr. W. H. Havelock, the Revenue Commissioner of the southern division, was one of the most able members of the Civil Service; he had held with the greatest credit to himself and satisfaction to Government the highest executive appointments in the Presidency. With the energy and courage of his race, though suffering from the effect of malarious fever, he started on a tour to see and judge for himself the reality and the severity of the famine. When called in to give his first report, his labours had sadly told on him, but, remarks the Honourable Mr. Gibbs, in his minute, 'Mr. Havelock nevertheless worked on, and died, like his noble father and uncle, in the performance of his duty.'

The Bombay Government had to face much severe criticism. To those critics already mentioned, and a portion of whose testimony has been given, must be added another, viz., the special correspondent of the *Statesman and Friend of India*. An Englishman, born in the country, this gentleman was familiar with the people and their tongue, and was well fitted for the task he undertook. He was not impressed with the absolute accuracy of all that was published by Government. He remarked :—'The statement for the week ending November 14 said, "In Sholapur there is no change from last week, except that, as grain is more plentiful and relief works are being extensively carried out, it may be presumed there is no danger of anything like starvation. Migration in large numbers to the Nizam's territory goes on." Now whatever is unequivocal in these words is true. But read the remark beside my letter of November 10, where I described what I saw during two whole days' patient investigation, going on foot over several miles of city and country, and guard-

ing my statements with scrupulous care, as anyone may see who reads the letter. There were at that time several hundred people going two and three days without work and without pay, and being strangers they could not get food on credit or from friends, and the result was that children and weakly adults died. The pressure had come on all at once; there were 40,000 people on half-organised relief works, and the town was crowded with travellers to the Nizam's territory who had left their villages without provisions for the way; consequently for several days matters were beyond the collector's control.'

This gentleman impugned the arrangements made in regard to works, and brought forward evidence at once interesting and of a certain value. He says: 'Kolgoan is a large village half-way between Ahmednagar and Dhond, with twelve *waddies* or hamlets lying round it. I first stopped at one of the *waddies*, about a mile from the chief village or *kusba*, which contained forty-five houses. The leading spirit in the group of people I encountered here was a woman of the best Mahratta type. I have no doubt she could have asserted herself with invectives had an occasion demanded it, but sagacity and benevolence were the prominent features of her character. Such were her accuracy of thought and precision of speech, that of the dozen men and women standing round scarcely one considered it necessary to add a word to what she said. I dare say her husband, who was present, would have been proud of her had Hindoo prejudice permitted such a sentiment regarding a woman. She had taken under her motherly protection a young widow who was reduced to skin and bone from sheer want of food. She pulled her about like a child to show me her condition, and then said with a strong touch of sarcasm in her tone: "This is

the kind they refuse to employ on the relief works. If you are strong and can find work somewhere for yourself, you may be taken on ; but if you go to the relief works because you have nothing to eat, they tell you you are too young or too weak. In order to be employed on a relief work, you must have at least a couple of pice or a seer of grain to call your own. If you have got nothing you will get nothing." I may explain that the work to which she referred was the Dhond road, on which the village stands, and I had already seen two boys hanging about a gang of coolies, but unable to get work, as only able-bodied men and women were admissible. So I endeavoured to explain to the woman that there were two kinds of works, and that her friend should go to a smaller work than the Dhond road. But she had an answer for that: "And where are the small works you speak of? Did this object get into this state by sitting still? She has gone twenty times to seek work. Now she has been told to go to such a place, that is ten miles off. Can she walk ten miles? She is scarcely able to stand. In the same way she was sent somewhere else the other day ; and when she got there, she was told the sanction for that work had expired. So she had to walk back here fasting. One of our men also went to another place, where they said anyone was taken on, but he found that the work was finished. So it happens every day. Those who can work get work on this road ; those who have no strength are sent ten miles away, and told to look for it." I thought this woman would be a capital person to explain what the people did when they had nothing to eat, and I asked the question. She immediately ordered off one of the men to bring an unripe fruit off a wild fig tree (*ficus glomerata*), and told me they cooked and ate those ; also that if one person managed to get

food for a meal, at least one other coaxed a part of it out of him; "and," she added, "in these hard times we don't try to eat every day, all our efforts are bent toward getting a meal once in two days; then, when our bellies are filled, we can be at rest for a day." There were a few fields of irrigated jowaree in this hamlet, but the plants were all stunted, and fit only to be cut for cattle, and the people were expecting a small return when they were able to sell it for that purpose.'

The Bombay Government, at an early stage of the campaign, satisfied themselves that there was food enough in the country, and that no absolute dearth need be apprehended, for a time at least, probably not at all. Testimony was singularly unanimous on this point. But whilst food existed for purchasers, the people who needed to purchase had no money wherewith to buy, and no work existed whereby money could be earned. This it was the task of Government to provide, and, as stated already, this is what was done with system, order, and regularity. The works, however, were not intended for all and sundry, for whosoever might come. Great efforts were made to guard against those obtaining Government relief who had no right to do so, but the efforts were not entirely successful. Mr. Gibbs says that two instances accidentally came to his knowledge of ryots of a well-to-do class having recourse to the relief works. In the one, a man, who, with his family, was employed on one of the public works in the Nagar district, complained to the officer in charge that his house had been broken into and robbed in his absence, and 500 rs. in money and jewels had been stolen. He was referred to the police, who enquired into the matter, apprehended the robbers, and recovered the property. In the other case, an officer riding down the embankment of the Dhond and Manmad Railway,

recognised two of the sons of a respectable landowner in the Satara collectorate engaged on the work, who, on being asked, said they had come there to do work as there was nothing to do at home; they said they brought some money with them, and so with the two annas wage were very comfortable. The second instance related to a later period of the distress than is now being referred to, but is mentioned here as showing the difficulty experienced in getting the works in order, and reducing to a proper system a scheme which embraced employment for a vast number of people over a great area.

On November 23 the Sarvajanik Sabha addressed their second narrative to Government. In it the extent and progress of the disaster were reviewed, and while the Sabha gratefully acknowledged the fact that the Government had, to the extent of its available means, put forth all its energies to relieve the famine-stricken districts, they thought it could not be gainsaid that Government laboured under a great disadvantage by reason of the total absence of any middle-class in this country owning subordinate but permanent interests in land. With great regret the Sabha felt called upon to state the popular conviction was that the relief measures undertaken were not adequate to the crisis. 'It may be,' they said, 'that the popular view in regard to the distress in the famine districts is exaggerated or one-sided, but it is necessary that Government should know the nature and extent of the popular complaints. People complain that notwithstanding the measures adopted by Government, hundreds of villages have been abandoned, and many lakhs of people have left their homes with their wives and children, and sought refuge in the Nizam's territories; many thousand heads of cattle have been sold at nominal prices to the butchers,

and many more have been abandoned. In the most afflicted districts famine deaths in considerable numbers have occurred. The labour test imposed upon the able-bodied is found to be too heavy for their famished frames; the wages paid are inadequately low; in many districts all who are willing to work do not find employment. No machinery has been organised to provide supplies to all parts of the country, or to the labour gangs on the labour works in the more remote and out-of-the-way districts. No arrangements have been made to preserve the cattle by providing fodder or pasture lands. No grain stores have been collected or charity houses opened for the infirm and the aged. Except in one district, no remissions of revenue have been officially notified, and no advances made for the digging of wells, &c. No steps have been taken, as in the Bengal and North-West Provinces, to suit the works to the previous habits and wants of the distressed population. The refusal of the Government of India to sanction the commencement of the large railway works recommended to it by the local Government, and the fact that till within the last few days no member of the Executive Government was deputed as Commissioner to the famine districts, are regarded as indications that the intensity of the distress experienced and apprehended has not yet impressed itself in its worst form upon the minds of the authorities.' They wished it to be understood that the Sabha did not for a moment sympathise fully with any or all of these complaints. 'Distressed people are always prone, and to some extent may claim a right, to be unreasonable in their demands for relief.' It was hoped that special Commissioners for the famine districts would be appointed, and that the same rules of action in all districts would be insisted upon. The question of remission of revenue was discussed, and the following

interesting facts were given:—'In those places where the famine has made itself most felt, the condition of the cattle has become a question of vital importance. It appears to the Sabha to be absolutely necessary that the Government should take up this question as one which concerns the permanent interests of revenue in more ways than one. The latest return of agricultural stock shows that the entire live-stock employed in agriculture in the nine Deccan districts of this Presidency does not fall short of 45 lakhs. The number of ploughs with two bullocks employed in agriculture is 3¼ lakhs, and with four bullocks is about 1½ lakhs, and the number of carts is about 2 lakhs. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that about 20 lakhs of plough and cart bullocks, &c., must be kept alive in the famine districts if the famine is not to be perpetuated during the next four or five years. More than one-half of the cattle in those districts which have suffered most from the famine have been already transported into the Nizam's territories of the Maval and Concan districts.'

Many other questions of importance were dwelt upon at great length; indeed, were it not for the importance of the subject, the Sabha's narratives would be chargeable with the fault which characterises most Indian reports, viz., their inordinate length. The reports appended to the narrative were of this character:—

'KARMALA, *October* 18.—More than one-fourth population left. 30,000 cattle belonging to that taluk taken to Nizam's dominions. More people and cattle going. 7,000 people are employed on relief works. Supply of drain water very scanty. Deaths from starvation in future apprehended. Soucars here have no grain in store. It is as hot as in May. From 50 to 200 labourers come every day. Collector's order is to employ all those that come. *October* 21.—Drinking

water of wells will last for 16 days only. Jowaree, 9 seers; rice, 5½; grain pulse, 6; wheat, 6½; turi pulse, 7½; oil, 2¼. No corn in store in the village. The water works at Anjandoho, if undertaken, will maintain many people, and be useful to cultivators. Monji rice all abandoned: 1½ of Nadi and Nilay ⅓. Many others leaving. Women, leaving infants 5 or 6 days old, are seen employed on the works. People are seen coming in crowds with their families crying for food and water to this place. Large relief works wanted. *November* 9.—Three deaths have occurred on account of want of food. Certain people are seen who cannot walk even to the place where corn is served. Fifteen or sixteen deaths are heard of by cholera on the works. Bad corn and too much fatigue is spoken of to be the cause. Too much work is exacted by the Public Works Department. Jowaree, 5 seers; wheat, 4¾; turi pulse, 4½; kurba, 5½; rupees 100; milk, 7 seers. Some villages altogether forsaken. Heat 92° or 93° in the shade.'

At the time the above letter was sent to Government, General Kennedy had been placed in charge of famine administration. In acknowledging its receipt he bore testimony to the ample evidence which the document showed of 'the interest and attention which the Sabha continues to bestow on the present critical condition of the country.' General Kennedy continued: 'His Excellency in Council will always feel indebted to the Sabha for suggestions which their knowledge and facilities for obtaining information may prompt them to offer, and will rely on their using their best efforts to assist the Government in the heavy task which they have before them, and to counteract the influence on the minds of the people of misapprehension as to the measures of the Government. Government have not received any authentic information of numerous deaths

in the affected districts, and certainly none are known to have occurred which can be attributed to want of food. The Sarvajanik Sabha were not probably aware, when your letter was written, that recent orders have been issued authorising a scale of wages on famine relief works bearing a proportion to the selling prices of the staple food grains in the neighbourhood of the works. Government have issued orders for opening the forest lands for grazing, under certain restrictions. They have also made arrangements for facilitating the transport of cattle by railway from Sholapur and the eastward to Poona, in order to assist them on the way to find grazing on the hills and elsewhere.

'Collectors have received discretionary allowances for the support of indigent persons who are infirm or incapable. Strict orders have been issued on this subject, and if the funds that have been placed at the disposal of the collectors should become exhausted, additional grants will be made. The Sarvajanik Sabha will be doing good service to the Government and to the people, if, through their agents, they would endeavour to make the local grain-holders understand that prices cannot be long maintained in the face of the supplies which are daily arriving, and which will arrive shortly in probably larger quantities, and that for the same reason the stocks of grain in the country are not likely to fall below requirements before they are replenished by the next harvest. All who hold grain stocks to any extent must be among those who have a stake in the country, and it ought not to be difficult to make them understand what is very obvious, *i.e.*, that it is not to their own interest to injure and disable the people, on whom the cultivation of the soil of this country depends, by abnormally running up prices; and that if they will consent to bring out and dispose of their stocks at fair

and moderate rates, they will be in a position to a great extent to rule the market prices of imported grain, and prevent the corn dealers making large abnormal profits at the expense of the country and of the ryots. It is not, of course, expected that such holders should altogether forego the advantage they possess at a time when, owing to failure of harvests, there has been a legitimate rise in the price of grain; but it is pointed out that, by grasping at inordinate profits, the grain holders, many of whom are themselves cultivators, are failing in their duties to their distressed fellow-countrymen, and are following a short-sighted policy, which, though it may secure them a present advantage, may also react upon themselves by inflicting an injury on the country generally of long duration.

'In conclusion I am to observe that the Government cannot always undertake to discuss in this form the merits or the demerits of the measures they may adopt or reject. They will, as heretofore, pay every attention to suggestions submitted, and will keep the public duly informed of the course of events and of the result of the efforts made for the relief of the prevailing distress. I am directed to forward for the information of the Sabha a copy of the last weekly statement regarding the distressed districts.'

The foregoing was one of the most satisfactory documents published during the whole campaign, and breathes a spirit of consideration towards non-official research and opinion foreign, under normal circumstances, to Indian departments.

During the progress of events described in the preceding pages, a voluminous correspondence by wire and dâk was passing between the Supreme Government and the local authorities. The latter wished to undertake large works; the former, for reasons already given in

Chapter II. of the Madras narrative, were in favour only of small works being put in hand Being satisfied of the wisdom of the course it wished to adopt, the Bombay Government adhered most firmly to its decision, and strained relations were the consequence. At this juncture—the middle of December—two visitors arrived at Bombay who strove to settle once for all the questions in dispute between local and supreme authority. Lord Lytton reached the city on December 20, after a tour of two months in the States bordering the north-west frontier ; Sir John Strachey, the new Finance Minister, had arrived a few days previously. Sir John is a man who, having once made up his mind, is not easily persuaded to alter it. He came to India with a famine policy fully thought out and clear from beginning to end. It was no theory, for he had put it into practice at Moradabad in 1861, and was prepared to have tried it in Bengal in 1874 if he had been in power in that province at the time. This policy was on the same lines as that adopted by Sir Philip Wodehouse and General Kennedy in Bombay. When, therefore, the question of famine administration came on for discussion, as it did very early during the Viceroy's visit, Sir John Strachey's influence was already enlisted on the side of the local Government. Lord Lytton, quick to perceive a good policy when it was laid before him, at once realised the position, and approved the carrying out of large works already begun and the commencement of others which were desired. It was pointed out that if the practice proposed by Sir Philip Wodehouse were pursued, revenue officials would have to take a secondary place, a position which they, as the Brahmans of the service, were not accustomed to, and the Department of Public Works would come to the front. There could be no doubt that this was, from an Indian point of view,

a startling innovation, but there was little hesitancy so far as the Viceroy was concerned in carrying out the system proposed. Notwithstanding the arrangements made, difficulties afterwards arose which will be described in due course.

While in Bombay, the Viceroy, in replying to an address from the Chamber of Commerce, took the opportunity to express the satisfaction of the Government of India with the manner in which the Government of Bombay was grappling with the difficult task imposed upon it. His Excellency added :—'The principles avowed by that Government as those which will guide its action appear to me to be generally sound and excellent. I am assured that the whole carrying power of the country is fully employed in forwarding to the affected districts grain procured by private enterprise. Happily, too, the crops in the Bengal Presidency and in British Burmah have been bountiful, so that there is no reason to apprehend any failure of the needful supplies.' On the same occasion the Viceroy thus expressed himself in regard to Government purchase of grain : 'So far, therefore, any interference by the Government is clearly unnecessary, and I need only say that the Government would, under any circumstances, contemplate direct intervention for the supply of food to the distressed districts with the utmost possible reluctance. We certainly shall not think of undertaking any such operation unless and until it be imposed upon us by a complete collapse of private enterprise, which at present I see no reason whatever to expect. I cannot, of course, pledge the Government under any conceivable circumstances not to import food into the distressed districts. In a condition of affairs such as the present, the Government must of necessity reserve to itself in the last resort complete freedom of

action. But there is certainly no reason why anyone should be deterred by the apprehension of Government competition from engaging in the importation of food into the distressed districts with the full confidence that he will reap the fruit of his enterprise.'

The numbers on relief works had steadily increased until, towards the end of December, nearly 260,000 persons were looking to Government for means of subsistence. During this month the migration of people, with or without cattle, to what were supposed to be lands flowing with milk and honey, reached its highest point. The third narrative of the Sarvajanik Sabha, addressed to Government on January 1, gives most striking instances of the great extent to which this was carried. It may be assumed that the statements made were accurate, for Government, in acknowledging the narrative, say: 'As regards the subject of migration, . . . although it must be accepted as an indication of considerable pressure having come upon the people, Government cannot but think that in many cases, especially in those of persons migrating in charge of cattle, the movement is a beneficial one. Government have not neglected to enquire into the condition of the people who have migrated in their new or temporary abodes, and are under no apprehension in respect to these people. Many are in attendance on cattle, and have means, and others have found employment on relief works, and there is every reason to expect that, when the time for preparing the land for the next monsoon crops arrives, they will all, or most of them, return to their homes.' Two acts on the part of Government had called for the expression of gratitude on the part of the Sabha; one was the appointment of Major-General Kennedy as chief of famine direction, which was held to give 'promise of a determination to

cope with the calamity to the utmost extent of the available resources of Government,' the other was the promptness with which the information received by Government was placed at the service of the public, and outside suggestions from all quarters received and attended to. The comprehensive foresight which anticipated all the varied contingencies and wants of the people had 'inspired a sense of general confidence, and might be said to have taken the sting out of the famine.'

During the month the Sabha had made most careful enquiries under several heads regarding the condition of the people. The details were thus summarised: 'Taking the Indapur taluk first in order, it is to be noted that the taluk had 86 villages, with a population amounting to 67,000 souls at the last census, and cattle numbering 44,200. Of these, when the horrors of famine first began to be felt and people emigrated *en masse*, as many as 57,500 men and 33,000 cattle left the villages. This occurred when the first rush to the Nizam's territories and to Poona and Bombay took place. After the first alarm was over and the confidence of the frightened villagers was restored by the energetic measures adopted by Government, a considerable number of the villagers returned and flocked to the relief works, so that Mr. Fletcher, of the Revenue Survey, was employed by Government to obtain accurate information regarding the number of people and cattle who had left the taluk. He found that out of 67,000 inhabitants, more than 40,000 persons, that is, nearly 60 per cent. of the population, and 80 per cent. of the cattle, had left the taluk. The earlier information received by the Sabha may have erred on the side of exaggeration by reason of its agents not having access to the more accurate sources of information, but taking even the official accounts, the figures are alarm-

ing enough. That more than 60 per cent. of the people should find it necessary to leave their homes and take 80 per cent. of their cattle with them, affords evidence of a frightful state of poverty, which furnishes a sad commentary on the boasted success of the revenue administration of the last ten years, commencing with 1867, in which year the new survey rates were introduced amidst a flourish of trumpets regarding the prosperity of the taluk, and its capacity to bear the so-called moderate enhancements. The total figures given above fail to give an adequate idea of the desolation of particular villages. In Akola, out of 815 inhabitants and 780 head of cattle, only 76 villagers remain, with 20 head of cattle. In Pimple, out of 228 men and 153 cattle, *nine men* and *three cattle* remain. In Hoolgoodvada only two men remain. In Bhatalwadi, out of 346 men and 340 cattle, only 77 men and 22 cattle remain. In Lakdi, out of a population of 637 souls and 435 cattle, 16 men and four cattle remain. These villages are, in fact, entirely deserted. There are those who set down this fact of wholesale emigration as a natural outcome of the migratory habits of the people, and who maintain that the men who left their villages belonged to the well-to-do class of the peasantry. Such a supposition is contradicted by the large number of the people who returned to their villages as soon as they heard of the relief works set on foot by Government. These people, it must be remembered, returned to earn their living by working on starvation wages. Their previous emigration, therefore, cannot be ascribed to any other cause than their extreme helplessness to support themselves and their families, even for one month, after they realised the fact that they had to face a famine.

'Proceeding next to speak of the Bhimthadi taluk,'

I regret I have not been able to obtain any information about the whole taluk collectively.* The information is confined to particular villages which are, however, very fair representatives of the better portions of the taluk. In the village of Dound, out of a population of 966 souls and 600 cattle, there are left in the village about 350 people and about 20 cattle. In Soongaum, which enjoys the advantage of being situated near the junction of the Nera and Kara rivers, with plenty of water available for drinking purposes, and a large extent of land belonging to Government, out of 1,400 inhabitants only 337 have not left the village, and out of 2,280 cattle 680 alone remain in the village. In Moorgaum and Kedagaum more than 50 per cent. of the inhabitants and about 60 per cent. of the cattle have left. These villages, it must be remembered, are all of them most favourably situated. The rest of the taluk is as wretched as Indapur, and the accounts received from the agents of the Sabha state that in many villages no lamp is lighted, which in the popular language expresses the most complete form of desolation conceivable. Baramatî is a mahál under this taluk. With the exception of the town of Baramati, more than 50 per cent. of the inhabitants of the surrounding villages have abandoned their homes. In the village of Sawal, out of a population of 720 souls and 1,130 cattle, there are now left in the village 103 men and 302 cattle. In the village of Niravages, out of a population of 740 souls and 590 cattle, only 50 men and 20 cattle are left in the village. If relief works on a large scale had not been started, the whole of the taluk would have been entirely abandoned. Nearly 4,000 people are employed on the road from Baramati to Margaum and from Patus to Supa, and on the Supa and Pandhari tanks. These relief works are the mainstay of the

population; but for them there would have been nothing to save the people from wholesale death by starvation.

'I shall next proceed to speak of the Kurmali taluk. The general features of the abandonment and desolation of the villages correspond closely with those of the worst parts of Indapur. In the village of Pophlaj, out of 525 inhabitants and 800 cattle, only 75 inhabitants and 60 cattle remain in the village. In another, out of 600 inhabitants and 1,000 cattle, only 150 men and 75 cattle remain. In Umrid, out of 925 men and 975 cattle, only 100 men and 110 cattle remain. In Zari, out of 1,450 men and 1,875 cattle, 240 men and 175 cattle remain. In Jintee, out of 2,200 inhabitants and 2,640 cattle, about 400 men and 100 cattle remain in the villages. In Pitkeshwar, out of 83 men and 57 cattle, only 5 men and 3 cattle remain. In Shetshing, out of 650 men and 400 cattle, 50 men and 60 cattle remain. The village of Wadwali is entirely destroyed. In Alega, Khurd, and Budruk, out of 120 houses and 800 cattle, only 35 houses remain unlocked and about 100 cattle. In Rén only two houses remain out of 35. The Sabha has received particular information about the desolation of many other villages in this taluk, the details of which will be found in the accompanying summary. On the whole, Kurmali seems to be one of the worst taluks in the Sholapur district.

'I shall proceed next to give details of the information received from the Barsi taluk, which enjoys natural advantages of a better rainfall and a river soil, and a more prosperous trading population than any of the taluks mentioned above. It appears from the reports received that about 15,000 men and 19,000 cattle have left the taluk. In the village of Mundapur, out of 200 inhabitants and 200 cattle, 40 inhabitants and 30 cattle alone remain. In Pimpulgaum, out

of 25 inhabitants and 100 cattle, 5 men and 20 cattle remain. In Pangari, which is a rich Bagayat village, out of 2,175 cattle, 625 alone remain. The neighbouring village of Nahanpur has been entirely abandoned by the few people that remained there after the first emigration. The cause of this abandonment is stated to be that a gang of 50 men attacked the village a few days ago, and though the attack was repelled the people have lost their confidence and have flocked into Pangari. Altogether the condition of the taluk, though not so bad as that of Karmali, is wretched enough, and it is quite clear that but for the help afforded by the relief works, it would have been found impossible to hold the people together. Even as it is, the relief works opened by Government in this taluk do not appear to be sufficient to meet the wants of the labouring classes who have been thrown out of employment. On the Barsi and Yedsi road, during the six weeks that the work has been in progress, the number of labourers increased from 600 during the first week to 1,500 during the second week, 3,000 during the fourth week, and 5,500 during the sixth week, and yet there were many more labourers coming to the work willing to labour the whole day on starvation wages. Such is the sad plight to which this rich cotton-growing district has been reduced during the first two months of the famine. No wonder if the wretchedness and misery of the less favoured districts is so complete as to baffle all attempts at amelioration which stops short of a complete change in the existing system of administering the land revenue.

'The Madhi district comes next in the order, lying at it does to the south-east of Barsi. In the village of Kurdi, out of a population of 4,000 inhabitants and 1,450 cattle, there remain about 2,100 inhabitants and 450 cattle. These numbers include Kurdi and its ham-

lets. In the town of Kurdi itself, out of a population of 2,500 inhabitants and 1,088 cattle, only 600 inhabitants and 100 cattle remain. In Angér out of 3,900 inhabitants and 3,700 cattle, 2,000 men and 1,000 cattle remain. Altogether about 50 per cent. of the men and 60 per cent. of the cattle have left the taluk on account of the pressure of the famine. In the neighbouring Pandharpur and Sangolee taluks, about which detailed information has not been received, it appears that nearly 50 per cent. of the 80,000 inhabitants of the Pandharpur taluk and 60,000 inhabitants of the Sangolee taluk have left their homes, and of the cattle about two-thirds have either perished or been removed from the districts. The same observation holds true of another taluk.

'With regard to the Kaladghi district, it appears from the accounts received by the Sabha, that the distress there is terrible. The rainfall in this district has been both absolutely and proportionately the most scanty in the whole of the Presidency, lower even than the Sholapur rainfall. The rise of prices is the highest as compared with the other famine districts. Like Sholapur, the whole district is affected by famine. Though the affected population exceeds that of any other famine district, the amount expended on the famine works shows the smallest total, about 34,000 rs. in all, being only 10 per cent. of the money spent in the Sholapur district. As a matter of fact, the relief work arrangements in this district were not set on a proper footing during the first month or two of the famine, and as a consequence the people have left and are still leaving in large numbers for the Nizam's territory. This unreasonable delay on the part of the local officers to commence relief works accounts for the fact that while the tide of emigration has stopped in all the

central districts, it does not seem to have received a similar check in the Kaladghi district. It is only lately that relief works have been opened in that district on any extensive scale, and already hundreds and thousands of labourers are flocking to be employed, till the crowd is so great that the officers in charge of the works find it impossible to register them all. Starvation and cholera cases are happening daily. Hundreds of people are now leaving.

'When reduced to such extremities they flock to the works, and as the labourers are not paid daily or on alternate days, they have often to work ten or twelve days before getting any wages. This state of things urgently calls for the most serious attention of the authorities in these parts. I submit that in a crisis like the present, the distress occasioned by delaying the payment of wages should be removed by the enlistment of a larger number of pay officers.'

Other points were dealt with, and the Sabha then expressed itself on the adequacy or inadequacy of the wage given to labourers on works. 'The new sliding scale of wages,' they said, 'threatens to inflict death upon many hundreds of persons by the slow process of gradual starvation. This change of resolution[1] has created an uneasy feeling all over the country, and the small increase of revenue which may be thus realised will engender much bitterness and misery, and will be altogether too dearly purchased with the loss of the moral strength and confidence which timely liberality in this respect cannot fail to secure. I accordingly request that the resolution in question be reconsidered, and that steps be taken to re-affirm the liberal instructions contained in the previous resolution of November 15.'

[1] The rate was slightly lowered in December.

The reply to this complaint—a very proper one, and loyally expressed—was dignified and, supposing all was working well, very satisfactory. The Government said:—'The sliding scale of wages on relief works adopted by Government is based on intelligible principles, and provides that a man so employed shall never receive less than one anna in addition to a sum of money that will purchase 1 lb. of grain. A heavy calamity has fallen on the whole community, and the poor class must bear their share of suffering. Government has no desire to carry on works to the extent that such works are now being prosecuted apart from the question of relief, or to expend the large sums of public money upon them that are now being spent. All that Government can rightly do in the interests of the entire community is to afford people who might otherwise starve an opportunity of earning a bare subsistence in return for such labour as they are able to perform; and the sliding scale of wages, while it secures that a labourer shall receive sufficient to support him in health, adjusts and equalises the rates of wages over the whole affected area, and regulates them in proportion to the prices at which food is procurable. If it were not for the sliding scale, as the price of staple food grains varies greatly in different localities, persons on relief works might in some districts earn more than a subsistence, and an injustice would thus be done to the general tax-paying community; in other districts the labourers would, in the absence of a sliding scale, earn less than a subsistence, and would in consequence be sufferers.'

CHAPTER II.

A GAME AT CROSS PURPOSES IN HIGH QUARTERS.

THE Governor of Bombay was at the Delhi Assemblage during the earlier days of January, whither he went at the latest possible moment, and whence he returned without an hour's delay, as soon as his presence could be dispensed with. The Viceroy gave a banquet in Sir Philip Wodehouse's honour, and, in proposing his health, eulogised his career from the time when he entered her Majesty's service as a writer in the Ceylon Civil Service thirty years previously, to his able administration of the famine in his Presidency. The Viceroy likewise gave a dinner in honour of the Governor of Madras, but did not propose his Grace's health thereat, which caused much surmise and gave occasion to many rumours in the camp. All the high officials, however, who were gathered round the Viceroy's table could not be expected to applaud with much sincerity the high terms of praise employed by Lord Lytton to do honour to his guest from Bombay. Much friction had been excited between the Governor General's Council and the Government of Bombay, and the correspondence, to this date, though the very embodiment of courtesy, was couched in strong official language, and each Council was striving to exhibit the hand of iron under the glove of velvet. Matters were not improved, too, in the Viceroy's camp by his Excellency having thrown in his adherence with the

subordinate Government and the policy it had fought for and had partly carried out in the teeth of orders to the contrary. The action of Sir Philip Wodehouse was much admired elsewhere by the non-official public, particularly in Madras, and it was openly suggested that other subordinate Governments might act similarly with advantage. Nevertheless the course adopted was not conducive to smooth and satisfactory working in ruling circles, and such action as that of the Bombay Government is to be deprecated when carried to the extent to which it eventually was. A *précis* of the correspondence will show this, and will also serve to bring out with some clearness the principle involved in large works and small works in meeting a famine.

The Government of Bombay reported, on September 13, that a serious crisis had arisen in the Presidency, and asked for sanction for sufficient expenditure to meet the necessities of the case, but did not say what sum of money would be wanted. Their letter referred only to a portion of the Poona district; and the Commissioner asked for 134,000 rs. per mensem, and suggested one or two works—the Khari-Kwasla Dam, and the Dhond-Munmar Railway. The Government of India, on September 29, replied that they were 'not prepared at present to pledge themselves to bear the expenditure which may be necessary.' Should the affair be local and temporary, provincial funds should meet it. Should actual famine threaten, then his Excellency in Council was to represent matters in time for a decision as to the incidence of relief expenditure. On October 3 the Governor of Bombay telegraphed for a definite answer as to Dhond and Munmar Railway:—'Distress very severe, and people becoming disorderly. Local funds exhausted. Government must help. No better work.' The reply next day was in the follow-

ing terms: 'Governor General in Council considers grounds submitted do not justify immediate commencement of Dhond and Munmar Railway. Local relief works and other relief operations may be started, selecting such works as can be found near the homes of the people, in preference to committing Government to commencement of large projects.'

On October 12 the Bombay Government returned to the charge:—'Reports are exceedingly bad. Small works have been sanctioned and are nearly done. We are unanimously of opinion that works on Dhond and Munmar Railway should be commenced at once. If there is not heavy rain in the course of a few days, the state of affairs will be most serious, and we must be free to deal with them at once. Local resources virtually exhausted. Collectors of Poona, Ahmednagar, and Sholapur each authorised to expend 25,000 rs. for those too infirm to work and too poor to buy, and for payment on local works.'

The Government of India took four days to reply, and then expressed regret at the distress, but did not think it right to authorise commencement of so expensive a work as the railway 'merely to meet a temporary, though serious, emergency. Local works of a character to give employment for some months should be authorised.' Expenditure for these was authorised, incidence to be settled afterwards. The railway question was to be decided on its merits. The Governor of Bombay replied on the 17th by wire:—'We will do our best to give effect to instructions sent.' In their despatch of October 19, the Government of India explained that the communication of September 13 was the first official intimation they had received from Bombay that the want of rain was likely to lead to serious distress. In regard to the Dhond-Munmar

Railway, they said:—'We were of opinion that we should adhere in this case to the principle which was acted on in regard to the scarcity in Behar at the end of last year: that it is not advisable for Government hastily to commit itself to large schemes of expenditure under the pressure of an apprehended scarcity, which schemes may involve an outlay far in excess of the requirements of the scarcity, and for an object which, in a financial point of view, may not be the most useful object to which State funds might be applied.'

So far the correspondence was conducted with the Viceroy's previously obtained assent and concurrence. Then, on October 21, Mr. Hope, the secretary to the Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, a Bombay civil servant, prepared a note giving the statistics of the affected districts in the Bombay Presidency. Nine districts were affected; area 54,203 square miles; population 8 millions, or 170 to square mile, of whom 33 per cent. were agriculturists. The incidence of land revenue varied in these districts from 5 annas 9 pie per acre; the lowest in Kaladgi, the highest in Khandeish, the average being 11 annas 7 pie per acre. The ensuing correspondence was conducted by the President in Council, Sir Henry Norman. On October 24 the Bombay Government telegraphed that Government were grateful for support promised in message of 16th. On the 25th, in reply to the Bombay resolution of October 16, the President in Council acknowledged and praised the promptitude and care which had been exhibited on the part of the subordinate authorities, but repeated, 'In works for relief, those should be preferred which can be completed or far advanced towards completion by the outlay which the scarcity demands, and which will not collect large gangs at a distance from their homes.' He sanctioned the

strengthening of the establishment and the appointment of an extra commissioner. On the same day a long letter was sent laying down the principles on which famine relief should be administered. For the alleviation of distress, the Bombay Government were, in the first instance, on the basis of such limited information as was then before the Government of India, requested, on September 29, to make full use of the local and provincial funds; but on the receipt of further particulars, full authority was conveyed in the telegram of October 4, for the starting of whatever relief works or relief operations the Governor in Council might consider necessary, and the question of the incidence of the expenditure was reserved for future consideration. 'The Government of Bombay have, in accordance with these instructions, been very fully utilising all the local resources, and have also made to four districts special grants of 25,000 rs. each. But it is now evident that considerable Imperial expenditure will be required, both in providing work and in supplying food to those who cannot work. I am directed to communicate the following remarks as to the nature of the works and other measures which may most usefully be undertaken:—With regard to the proposed Dhond and Munmar Railway, to which further reference is made in the accompaniments to your letter of the 16th instant under reply, I am to state that the decision of the Government of India is contained in the telegram of the same date from this department. In the construction of railways in India it is absolutely necessary that each project should be taken up in succession in the order of its necessity as compared with others; that no projects should be undertaken under present financial circumstances which cannot be depended on eventually to return full interest on the

outlay, and that only so many should be in hand at one time as the borrowing powers of the State permit. In works designed to afford relief during scarcity, moreover, it is now an established principle that those ought to be selected, as far as practicable, which can be completed or far advanced towards completion by the outlay which the scarcity demands. Testing the Dhond and Munmar Railway project by the above conditions, the information at present before the Government of India does not appear to justify the immediate commencement of the line, while the relief outlay which it would provide would bear a very small proportion to the entire expenditure which it would involve, and would be confined to a comparatively small area of the affected tracts. His Honour the President in Council trusts that the Government of Bombay will apply these principles, as far as they are applicable, to all projects which may be suggested to them for commencement at the present juncture. The prominent position held by tank clearances and repairs or improvements of existing roads among the works which, as appears from the accompaniments to the memorandum of October 13 above referred to, have been sanctioned by his Excellency the Governor in Council, is entirely in accordance with those principles. The remarks of the collector of Poona as to the inexpediency of collecting large gangs away from their homes on large works have the full concurrence of the Government of India.

'While organising suitable relief works, attention will, no doubt, be given to ascertain as far as possible the extent of the grain reserves existing in each district, and how far they are being, or are likely to be, supplemented from without by private enterprise. This enquiry appears to be of special importance in the case of Satara and the Southern Mahratta country, the people

of which are probably, on the one hand, better able to afford to purchase grain than those of the poorer districts further north and east; but, on the other, are less likely to obtain grain to purchase, owing to the absence of railway communication and the difficulties of getting supplies up by sea. The President in Council cordially approves of the decision to invite tenders for the supply of grain to persons employed on works and to those needing to be fed, as also that the Government should abstain from making purchases in the general market on its own behalf, except in the last resort.

'The President in Council has observed with much satisfaction the efforts which have been made in some parts by the more wealthy or influential native gentlemen for the relief of their suffering countrymen, and the support which they have given to the measures of the district officers, and to the endeavours of the latter to allay panic; and he trusts that every scope will be afforded to such benevolent dispositions, whether in the formation of central and local relief committees to superintend the distribution of food, or in the raising and application of private subscriptions to specific charitable purposes, such as might be held to be beyond the scope of the action of Government.

'The telegram forwarded on the 21st instant will have made known his Honour's request that all communications touching the initiation of the measures regarding the scarcity should be addressed to this department. This course, which was the one adopted during the famine in Bengal, appears necessary to secure promptitude and unity of action, and will not interfere with the reference by this department to that of Public Works of any matter in which professional questions may be involved. Whether a similar concentration of duties should be adopted in Bombay, is, of course, entirely for

the consideration of his Excellency the Governor in Council. At the same time I am to point out, as an illustration of the inconveniences of more than one department dealing with the same subject, that unless my letter of September 29 was unduly delayed in transmission, the Bombay Public Works Department were up to the 9th instant unaware that you had received it.

'To what has been stated in the telegram regarding the publication of official communications to the Government of India, it is unnecessary to add more than that, while the President in Council fully appreciates the advantages of securing the sympathy and confidence of the public, and the intelligent co-operation of traders and others, by a frank statement of facts relating to the scarcity and of the measures of relief which are being adopted, the publication of proposals involving important principles which are under consideration by the Government of India should be postponed until the decision of that Government has been received.

'With reference to the request contained in the same telegram for statements showing the condition of each taluk in the nine districts of the Deccan which are more or less threatened, I am to explain that his Honour has no doubt that the Government of Bombay has already procured such information for its own use, but that without having some such comprehensive review before it, the Government of India is unable to estimate with accuracy what may be the exigencies of the situation, or to do justice to the proposals for relief which are submitted by the Government of Bombay. The statements need not be of an elaborate character, but, after giving the principal figures in tabular form, should conclude with general remarks containing the best information procurable as to the condition and prospects of the taluk. In addition to these state-

ments once for all, a slightly fuller account of each district in the weekly telegram on the "season and crops" will be all that the Government of India at present require.

'In conclusion, I am desired to express the cordial acknowledgments of the Government of India of the promptitude and care with which the Government of Bombay and its officers are dealing with the emergency. His Honour the President in Council has no desire to impose upon the Bombay Government any restrictions beyond those which are afforded by the experience of the past, as authoritatively recorded by the Government of India, and has the fullest confidence that his Excellency the Governor in Council will exercise the discretion vested in him so as to prevent any loss of lives of her Majesty's subjects, without incurring an expenditure of public money in excess of the necessities of the case.'

It is interesting to note what led to these orders. The Bombay resolution of October 16, after recapitulating the evidence of severe and long-continued scarcity being imminent, calculated that the Government would want to feed 219,440 persons × 240 days ÷ 18 lbs. rupee = 29,25,866 rs., say 30 lakhs, and added: 'His Excellency in Council is clearly of opinion that, in all cases in which it may be found practicable, it will be far more convenient, and in the end far more economical, to select for relief works those of considerable magnitude which have been well examined and approved, though unavoidably postponed, on which the labour of large bodies of men can be advantageously concentrated.' Payments were to be made either in money or in grain.

The despatch to the Secretary of State of October 26 is important from its bearing on a letter addressed to *The Times* by Sir Henry Norman, in September 1877.

That despatch shows that in the interval between the 19th and the 26th, things had changed. The despatch says: 'Since we last addressed your Lordship we have received more detailed accounts from Bombay, which disclose, we regret to say, a much more extended area of distress than had at first been supposed. The Government of Bombay have, in accordance with the instructions received, been fully utilising all local and provincial resources, but it is now evident that these must be supplemented by considerable Imperial expenditure for both providing work and supplying food to those who cannot work. In selecting works to be started for purposes of relief, we have impressed upon the local Government the importance of preferring those which can be to a considerable degree completed within the outlay necessary for relief alone, and which will not draw large bodies of men to a distance from their homes.'

The Bombay Government recorded a further resolution on October 27: 'His Excellency the Governor in Council, while regretting that the Government of India have deemed it their duty, for the reasons stated in their telegram, to withhold permission for the commencement of work on the Dhond and Munmar Railway, gratefully acknowledges the confidence placed in the Government and the authority conveyed to them to incur expenditure.'

Correspondence of minor importance was followed up by a telegram on November 9, stating that the President in Council did not approve of Nira Canal and Malsej Ghat as relief works. Several other new works were to be suspended pending further consideration. If, pending explanation, other relief works were needed, minor works should be commenced. Certain works were suggested in a note drawn up by Mr. Hope, who brought

his local knowledge to bear on the proposals of the Bombay Government.

On November 9 a letter went from the President in Council to the Government of Bombay, amplifying the telegram of same date, explaining the reasons of the Government of India for disallowing Malsej Ghat Road and Nira Canal, on the grounds of their committing Imperial revenue to heavy future outlay, also criticising unfavourably other projects. On November 10 a further telegram was sent, asking for full information about irrigation relief works, and ordering that no work estimated to exceed 30,000 rs. should be undertaken without the previous sanction of the Government of India.

Against these orders the Bombay Government telegraphed a remonstrance on 11th, as follows: 'This Government accordingly (*i.e.*, in accordance with the Government of India's previous orders) made a very careful selection of the works which would probably afford the greatest amount of relief, avoiding as far as possible large projects involving continuance of heavy expenditure after emergency had ceased. They stated distinctly that they had no intention of beginning all the works simultaneously, but that the scheme was sanctioned as a whole in order that the local officers might be prepared to act as soon as emergency arose. Local works in a great measure are exhausted, whereas pressure for employment much increases. The President in Council now disallows specific works, some of which have, under existing pressure, been already commenced. Every day brings urgent application for others. Does President in Council desire works which have been commenced to be stopped, and applications for others to be refused? Does he withdraw authority given in Government of India's telegram of October 16?' Allusion is made to the telegram of 10th and to the reply it

received in the despatch to the Secretary of State of November 17. After summarising the correspondence the despatch goes on: 'In reply, we have requested the Government of Bombay to inform us of the names of the works to which they allude. On receipt of this information we shall issue such further instructions as circumstances may appear to call for. At present we will only observe that it is very far from being our desire to impose any unnecessary restrictions on the action of the local Governments, but we hold it to be of great importance from a financial point of view, that large projects should not be commenced, under stress of the present emergency, which are likely to involve a continuance of heavy expenditure after the scarcity has ceased. . . . As we have left the Government free to substitute smaller, and more strictly local, works for those which we have stopped or suspended pending enquiry, we cannot think that any practical inconvenience is likely to result from our orders.'

To the telegram referred to in the despatch above mentioned the Government of Bombay replied on November 19, giving names of works alluded to, and adding:—'If the Government of India will fix the limit beyond which they are not prepared to supply funds in meeting present emergency in this Presidency, this Government will do the best they can up to that limit, but it is hoped that specific works may not be indicated by the Government of India, either for stoppage or execution, for the character and position of relief works must depend on local circumstances which vary rapidly. No road works will entail serious liabilities after the emergency has passed, and, though irrigation works are heavier, they will prevent recurrence of similar future emergency in their neighbourhood.'

A letter of November 11 was received from Bom-

bay, saying the local Government had appointed, in accordance with sanction, an additional commissioner, and had concentrated all famine correspondence on the Public Works Department. This is important, as showing that, as the Government of Bombay had said, 'From the character of the present difficulty, it is clear that relief to the people will have mainly to be afforded by means of public works,' &c. This decision was not quite satisfactory to the honourable gentleman in charge of the Revenue Department, Government of India, and it is thought added to the friction which subsequent correspondence discloses. It was, however, essentially a right one. The Government of India, in a letter of November 24, apparently objected to the decision, first, adducing historical precedents; second, arguing that collectors must be the backbone of any system of relief, and would not like being transferred to a new and specialised department; and third, the civil department of the Secretariat might be expected to look at the famine question from a broader standpoint than professional men.

In their letters of November 4, 8, and 15, the Bombay Government sent the statements showing the condition of each of their affected districts called for in the Government of India's telegram of October 22. These were submitted, together with their two first weekly narratives, to a minute analysis by Mr. Hope, which led to the Government of India's letter of November 30. This reply is to the following effect:—

Paragraph 2. The twofold object in obtaining statistics is (1) To see that expenditure is neither excessive nor at variance with principles adopted by Government; (2) To have a trustworthy forecast for financial purposes. The present statements were inaccurate and incomplete, and did not give the local officers' opinions.

Paragraph 4 asked for estimates of crop saved, of revenue to be submitted, condition of agricultural stock, of water supply, of average of prices, of local stocks and markets available for supply, of population, of movements of people, of relief works started and proposed, of charitable relief, of the number of persons to be relieved in different ways. Paragraph 6 called for report as to condition of political States.

On November 30 a telegram was sent from Bombay as follows:—'Population distressed taluks five millions. Estimated maximum requiring assistance, one million. Outlay up to March 31 estimated at 54 lakhs, thereafter at 86 lakhs—140 lakhs in all.' This telegram was explained at greater length in a letter of November 30, giving population of affected tracts five millions, of whom on an average one-tenth × 10 months would come on to relief. Of this number nine-tenths would be on works costing 3 rs. per head per mensem, and one-tenth would be on gratuitous relief costing 2 rs. per mensem, in all 130 lakhs, to which 10 rs. were to be added for extra cost to departments. The Government of India, in a despatch of December 8, criticised this estimate, as the proportion of the population expected to come on relief was excessive.

On November 27 the Government of Bombay sent a letter of stern remonstrance against the general line adopted by the Government of India. The letter is so important as to be deserving of recapitulation at length. The points most worth noticing are these: After explaining the state of the country, and the courses open to them in regard to relief, the Government of Bombay give reasons for their selection of works. (1) So that each district should be provided for. (2) That they should be arranged with reference to water supply, *i.e.*, first in the east, and then when water there failed,

in the west. (3) That they should impose as little cost as possible on Government after the emergency had passed away. (4) That they should be well-considered and defined works, and not impromptu efforts. The Government then proceed to reply, point by point, to the criticism of the Government of India on each specific work, pointing out some errors of detail, and laying great stress on the Dhond-Munmar Railway and other works. 'It is impossible,' it was said, 'that this Government can make satisfactory arrangements for relief works if they are to be told that a certain railway should not go on as a relief work on grounds of general policy, and that a road substituted for it cannot be permitted to proceed because this railway may eventually be constructed.' They drew attention also 'to the previous assurance from the Government that as regards minor and local works their reserves had virtually been exhausted.' They argued that local works of any real value could not be improvised on the moment, and that to start them without proper consideration and supervision would entail great waste of public money; whereas these large works had been previously planned and approved, and could be efficiently supervised. They say it is true that their information has been partial and their statements incomplete; but while they and local officers are straining every nerve to deal with the real emergency, they ought not to be taken to task for these deficiencies. 'If this Government is to be subjected to the necessity, before taking any action, of proving its position, step by step, to the Government of India, and making clear to them the intrinsic and relative merits of every local road or work, and the opportuneness of the time selected for its commencement, his Excellency in Council does not see how the necessary operations are to be sufficiently, promptly, or

successfully carried out, for circumstances alter suddenly and materially from day to day.' They added that the statement of works had been examined with great care by his Excellency, the Members of Council, the Secretaries, and the Revenue Commissioners.

Then followed some irritating correspondence about irrigation works, showing that the subordinate Government was expecting a scrutiny and reply from the Government of India, and the latter Government was looking for further details from Bombay. The misunderstanding was only of importance in regard to the delay and to the increase of acrimony which were the consequence. Then followed the letter of December 15, a letter which, as first issued, was published by the Bombay Government, but for which another version was afterwards substituted. The gist of the letter is as follows:—Paragraph 2 affirms continued confidence in the Government of Bombay; says the Government of India has laid down certain broad lines within which the local Government has full liberty to select and organise its own works, and the Government of India only criticises individual works under wholly exceptional circumstances (which, however, are not stated), but the Government of India cannot divest itself of financial responsibility, nor, consequently, of the duty of obtaining full information or of interposing when its limits are overstepped. Paragraph 3 recapitulates the principles laid down by the Government of India in previous correspondence. Paragraph 5 points out how those principles might have been more strictly and speedily acted on by setting collectors to work at first on minor local works and drawing up programmes of larger works for future use; also notices the delay in appointing a third commissioner. Paragraph 6 points out that Khandeish is insufficiently provided for, while

Satara has a larger assignment than it is entitled to; also explains why Nira Canal and other works were objected to. Paragraph 7 recapitulates the orders of the Government of India on these works. Paragraph 8 goes into the proposed list of projects, but adds a very material proviso to the effect that the Supreme Government never supposed that minor works would suffice for a prolonged famine, and only wanted them to be drawn upon in the first instance. Larger works to be held in reserve, and undertaken when it becomes certain that provision must be made for larger numbers of the able-bodied poor. Paragraph 9 asks for further information in regard to irrigation works. Paragraph 11 says that when complete information is received, the President in Council contemplates leaving the local Government perfectly free in carrying out the plan of operations which may be decided on.

On December 18 the Government of Bombay submitted a note on the general policy of its Government in respect to the famine. Part I. gives the history of the seasons, rainfall, crops, prices, and statistics of affected population. Part II. deals with the reasons which led the Government to decide on leaving the trade unfettered, and the successful results, up to that date, of this policy. Part III. deals with relief measures. (1) Organisation of works. (2) Of charitable relief. In discussing (1) works, the Bombay Government show that they acted not only on general *à priori* reasoning, but strictly in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Government of India's resolution of February 18, 1875, which lays down that 'large works should be opened at once; small local works subsequently, as the necessity for them arises.' And in paragraph 12 they show how the small works operate in the direction of a waste of money, and criticise the policy adopted by the Government of India

in objecting to large tanks. They add that there were then 250,000 people employed, and small works, moderately beneficial, could scarcely be found. In regard to (2) charitable relief, they say that out of the 190,000 rs. allotted, only 5,000 rs. had, up to that time, been spent; and added, 'measures are in preparation, but the time has not yet come for carrying them out.' Part IV. Remission to the extent of half a million sterling anticipated. Part V. repeats what had been said in previous reports of the condition of the people, of the cattle, and the water supply.

There had been some intermediate correspondence in regard to special works. On December 8 Bombay had asked for sanction for two works (Sholapur and Bellary Road and a tank at Medleri) which had been commenced by the collectors. The Government of India, in a communication of December 16, stated that they regretted that the collectors should have been left in ignorance of the limitation imposed by the Supreme Government, and proceeded to sanction both works, subject, in one case, to very great reduction. They also called for explanation as to why the Pingli tank had been started. The reasons were given in the Bombay Government's reply of December 22. In another letter, of December 18, the subordinate authorities explained their reasons for concentrating famine correspondence in Public Works Department. This was not specially answered. Sanction was also asked in December for sundry other projects, to which no special replies had been given when the Government of India's policy in regard to Bombay underwent a decided change. The recorded indications of this change are to be found in two demi-official letters to Sir P. Wodehouse, written by Sir J. Strachey, in the Viceroy's name, at Bombay on December 21. 'The Viceroy,' he

said, 'is quite content to leave it to your judgment to proceed, without delay, with the construction of any works the immediate commencement of which you believe to be absolutely necessary for the support of the people.' The one condition was that they should not involve heavy responsibilities for future completion or maintenance; and this condition was withdrawn in regard to one special work on which Sir P. Wodehouse insisted. The result of his Excellency's personal discussion at Bombay with the Bombay Governor is given in a letter of January 5, 1877. The gist of that letter is, after explaining the reasons on which the previous policy had been grounded, to withdraw 'the objection to commence large relief works, and the prohibition to commence irrigation works exceeding 30,000 rs.' The enforcement of provincial responsibility, however, was maintained.

This brings the correspondence to the period when Sir Richard Temple was appointed Famine Delegate to Southern India. Primarily his mission was to the Madras Presidency, but, to make the censure upon Madras look less severe, he was instructed to include Bombay as within the scope of his enquiries.[1] This was understood by the Government of Sir Philip Wodehouse, but the bit being now finally between their teeth, that Government was not disposed to submit even to the friendly criticisms of the Delegate, and very soon found occasion to call into question the instructions issued to the representative of the Government of India.

Almost immediately after Sir P. Wodehouse's return from Delhi, the Bombay Government renewed their

[1] This intention is thus expressed in a despatch to the Secretary of State: 'Considering the advantage of dealing with the entire famine upon consistent and harmonious principles, together with the contemplated future connection of Sir R. Temple with Bombay, we have deemed it advisable to include that Presidency within the scope of his mission.'

wordy warfare with their superiors. A letter had been written from the Delhi camp on December 20, in which paragraph 5 was as follows: 'With reference to the expected immigration of 8,000 distressed persons from neighbouring territory, I am directed to state that the President in Council cannot recognise, in this or any other instance, an obligation to provide extensive relief to the subjects of a foreign State, and that all political officers should receive instructions, where such States are under British management, to organise, and where they are not, to urge the durbars to organise measures of relief sufficient to meet the wants of whatever distressed population they contain.' In the reply on January 8, three somewhat petulant paragraphs appear, viz. 2 to 4, which are as follows:—

'His Excellency in Council feels himself somewhat embarrassed by the announcement contained in the fifth paragraph of your letter, that the President in Council cannot recognise an obligation in any instance to provide extensive relief to the subjects of a foreign State. That it is the duty of such States to afford relief to their subjects to the extent of their means cannot be denied; it is also clearly the duty of their political officers to urge them to do so; and the political officers employed under this Government are using their best endeavours to this end under the orders conveyed to them in paragraphs 11 and 12 of Government resolution by this Government, No. 267 C. W. 1,032 of December 13, 1876, a copy of which is attached. But if this Government is to act on the belief that they will be held responsible if any person be permitted to die from starvation, where the death could be prevented by action on the part of this Government, after the very prominent assertion of the paramount authority of the British Government which has recently taken place, this

Government apprehends that their conduct would be seriously called in question if they were to refuse relief to people of a so-called foreign State, who had been driven by the shortcomings of their ruler to take refuge in British territory.

'Moreover, it would be almost impracticable, on a sudden emergency, to ascertain exactly who were our own subjects and who were foreigners. Our own villages and those of foreign States are in some cases considerably intermingled; and it should not be forgotten that when the pressure of distress began to be felt the people of Sholapur crowded into the Nizam's territory, and very probably, if the people of Khandeish are subjected to pressure in the course of one or two months, many will pass into Holkar's territory. His Excellency in Council, therefore, takes the liberty of inviting a reconsideration of these orders.'

A reply followed on January 22, in which it was pointed out that the rule referred to applied expressly to extensive relief, and would not preclude the grant of temporary relief in isolated cases.

Whilst the Supreme Government was thus dealing mildly and forbearingly with its subordinate, fresh occasion for offence was found. The letter of December 15, summarised on a previous page, was subjected to close and adverse criticism. Gratitude was expressed by the Bombay Government for the confidence which it was said was reposed in them, but it was pointed out that five days after the letter had been written the Viceroy flatteringly stated his opinion of the manner in which the local Government was grappling with the difficult task imposed upon it. After that the Government of Bombay would have been glad to abstain from prolonging the correspondence, but there were certain passages which 'render it imperative in them to remove

all doubt as to the principles they have maintained and the measures they have recommended for dealing with the famine.'

Point by point it was shown that the subordinate authority was right and the supreme authority wrong, whilst as regards economy, Sir Philip Wodehouse averred that he had never lost sight of it, had indeed anticipated all instructions on the subject. Instances were cited in proof thereof, and even so recently as January 5 a resolution had been issued disallowing pay on Sundays, whilst the Government were at that moment devising measures which they hoped would still further diminish the expenditure. The letter concluded: 'His Excellency in Council, in future measures he may be compelled to take or to advise, will not fail to bear in mind that he shares with the Government of India the responsibility of properly utilising the public funds, and for avoiding all needless or wasteful expenditure.'

Two days subsequently further cause for annoyance was found, this time in the instructions issued to Sir R. Temple on the 16th instant (which will be found quoted at length in the Appendix to vol. ii.). By orders issued on January 18, village officers were directed to 'take care that no person is allowed through obstinacy to die of starvation.' This injunction was quite in conformity with the principle on which the Government was then acting, viz., that no person was to be allowed to die of starvation if it was in the power of the Government to prevent it. But 'his Excellency in Council now observes that in the instructions issued by the Government of India to Sir R. Temple on the 16th instant, the following very important qualification is introduced :—"Even for an object of such paramount importance as the preservation of life, it is obvious that

there are limits which are imposed upon us by the facts with which we have to deal." The letter in question does not lay down any general principles by which the district officers should be guided in refusing the aid needed to preserve life; and his Excellency in Council would view with satisfaction the issue of supplementary instructions on that point. In the meantime, however, he feels convinced that in no case could assistance be more properly refused than in that of a man who wilfully and deliberately refuses to render the reasonable equivalent demanded by the Government for the means of subsistence which it is ready to afford him. It is therefore ordered, in modification of the instructions issued by the Revenue Commissioner, that in the case of an individual refusing to perform work which he is capable of doing on the terms fixed by Government, no relief shall be afforded him at the public expense during the continuance of such refusal.'

On the following day (January 25) a resolution was published which proved to be the last symptom of independence and impatience of control which the Government of India would endure.

Sir Richard Temple's minutes were published as soon after they were written as possible, and those relating to Bombay quickly attracted attention, and called forth the following remonstrance, which, because of its importance, must be quoted in full:—

'*Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of Bombay, dated January* 26, 1877.

'*Resolution.* — His Excellency the Governor in Council has had under consideration the minutes addressed to the Government of India by Sir Richard Temple on the 9th and 12th instant, conveying his

impressions on the state of matters connected with the famine in this Presidency, as formed on the information he was able to obtain from Bombay officers during his rapid journey from the North-West Provinces and during his stay at Sholapur.

'The views expressed in these minutes agree on almost all points with those which the Government has throughout enunciated and endeavoured to carry out, and the Government feel it due to themselves to state clearly the principal cause of defects indicated as existing in the system of relief in this Presidency.

'So far back as October 16, 1876, they announced that they had for six weeks been spending money on minor works which they were satisfied were entirely inadequate to meet the serious demands they must inevitably encounter. They added: "His Excellency in Council is clearly of opinion that in all cases in which, with due regard to sanitation and other local circumstances, it may be found practicable, it will be far more convenient, and in the end far more economical, to select for relief works those of considerable magnitude, which have been well examined and approved, though unavoidably postponed, on which the labours of large bodies of men can be advantageously concentrated. There may be cases in which it may be necessary to have recourse to isolated works of a trifling nature, but these should as far as possible form the exceptions."

'About this time, in consequence of the departure of his Excellency the Viceroy on tour, the administration of the Government of India fell into the hands of the President in Council, and in the reply addressed to the Government of Bombay by his direction on October 25, 1876, is to be found the origin of the embarrassment with which this Government has had to

contend, and of the defects of system which Sir Richard Temple is understood to notice.

'In that letter, after reviewing what was believed to be the condition of the distressed districts, and pointing out how they should be dealt with, the President in Council intimated that the remarks of the collector of Poona as to the inexpediency of collecting large gangs away from their homes on large works have the full concurrence of the Government of India. The collector of Poona had observed:—"I am strongly of opinion that as many small works should be undertaken as possible. I much fear that the collection of large numbers of people in localities where they must live in great discomfort and without shelter may lead to the outbreak of disease which it would be difficult to combat:" and he added, speaking of prickly pear clearance, "it would certainly be more popular because it would not take people away from their homes." It is not too much to say that at the present time there is nothing which more obviously requires to be checked than the "popularity" of the relief works.

'The position was still further complicated by the President in Council in the same letter inviting the attention of this Government to a resolution of the Government of India of February 18, 1875, the 12th paragraph of which contained the following passage:—"The experience of former famines with respect to the advantage of opening public works, especially at an early stage of the distress, has been fully confirmed. Large works should be opened at once, small local works subsequently, as the necessity for them arises."

'This letter was followed by further communications setting forth the objections of the President in Council to several of the large works recommended by the

Bombay Government, and as a consequence the Government was reduced to greater dependence on the small works, of which the effect is now evident.

'About the middle of December his Excellency the Viceroy arrived in Bombay, and on December 20, in reply to an address from the Chamber of Commerce, he observed—"I gladly take this opportunity to express the satisfaction of the Government of India with the manner in which the Government of Bombay is grappling with the difficult task imposed upon it. The principles avowed by that Government as those which will guide its action appear to me to be generally sound and excellent."

'On the same day on which these words were uttered, the Government of Bombay received a letter dated December 15, communicating the dissatisfaction of the President in Council with their measures on several points, and again urging the prosecution of minor works.

'This letter was subsequently much modified, and in that form, though still dated December 15, was not received in Bombay until the 11th instant.

'Sir Richard Temple has since been formally deputed to examine and criticise the proceedings in the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay. The instructions to him in his reports, and the despatches with which the latter have been transmitted to the Secretary of State, have been immediately published. With the tone and spirit in which those reports have thus far been framed, his Excellency in Council is quite satisfied. But he claims the right in cases in which this Government is concerned to supplement them with the information necessary to the full understanding of the bearings of the case; and having thus in the present instance explained the chief cause of the defects to which Sir Richard Temple has alluded, his Excellency sees with pleasure that by the

publication of the instructions to him, as well as of his minutes, all points of difference with regard to the mode of relief have been removed, and that, subject to certain conditions, the Government of Bombay may with confidence use its best endeavours to carry out the policy which it from the first advocated, and which is now accepted by all.'

In any case a letter of this kind would be indiscreet, but the offence against superior authority was aggravated by copies of it being sent to the Bombay newspapers and published on the date of issue. Its publication caused some sensation in India, and the action was viewed with great displeasure by the supreme authorities, who were made to look ridiculous in the eyes of the world, seeing they were represented as possessing no settled policy or even homogeneity of view. The resolution issued on January 25, criticising the orders regarding support of life, was deemed a grave breach of official etiquette, and was replied to on February 2. In this reply the local authorities were told that the views of the Government of India had been 'seriously misunderstood.' 'The Government of Bombay,' it was remarked, 'seems to think the Government of India has laid down the doctrine that there are certain circumstances in which the Government ought to allow people to die of starvation, although it may be in its power to prevent it. . . . It cannot be stated too strongly that the Government of India has never had any such views as those which the Government of Bombay supposes it to have expressed.' In laying down instructions of a purely official character relative to the management of relief operations by the officers of Government, the Governor General in Council 'thought it out of place and unnecessary to give assurances of his sympathy with suffering, or to dwell on his determination, which he thought had already been made suf-

ficiently clear, that no one shall die of starvation if it be in the power of the Government to prevent it. In regard to the duties which humanity imposes upon the Government, there has not been, and will not be, any change of policy. We say that human life shall be saved at any cost and at any effort; no man, woman, or child shall die of starvation. Distress they must often suffer; we cannot save them from this. We wish we could do more, but we must be content with saving life and preventing extreme suffering, and it taxes all our efforts and all our resources to accomplish even this. In regard, therefore, to the enquiry which has been made by the Government of Bombay as to the "general principles by which the district officers should be guided in refusing aid needed to preserve life," the reply must be that there are no such principles, and that there are no circumstances in which such aid can be refused.' The Governor General in Council further stated that he did not believe anyone ever died of starvation through obstinacy, and certainly no rules for dealing with such cases could be necessary.

In the meantime, Sir Alexander Arbuthnot, as head of the department charged with famine administration, girded himself for conflict, and he defends himself and his colleagues from the charges brought against them in a minute which would have made no mean pamphlet as regards substance if published in that form. He pointed out in his first paragraph that the resolution pitted the Governor General in Council against the President in Council, the obvious object being to disparage the action taken by the latter and to hold it up to public contempt. He complained: 'The day before the issue of the resolution to which I allude, the gist of it was embodied in a leading article which appeared in one of the Bombay newspapers, in which Sir

Henry Norman and I are mentioned by name as the authors of the obstructions against which it is alleged that the Bombay Government have had to contend, and which bears obvious marks of having been inspired, if not actually written, by some one immediately connected with the Government of Bombay.' Sir Alexander then proceeded laboriously to show that the Viceroy had been in harmony with his Council, and that the latter had acted in accordance with principles laid down before the Viceroy proceeded on tour. The change of policy from small works to large works was due to Sir John Strachey's arrival, he holding opinions very strongly opposed to those which had hitherto guided the action of the Viceroy's Council. He stigmatised the 'extraordinary action' of the Bombay Government in writing and publishing in the newspapers a resolution in which they had contrasted the supposed views of the Viceroy with those of the President in Council, with the manifest object of disparaging the latter, and in which they had disclosed to the public the essentially private arrangement made between the Viceroy and the Governor of Bombay, that a certain letter should be withdrawn and another substituted for it. Of the letter of January 18 it is said, 'Like other communications from Bombay it raises an entirely false issue, and misrepresents what was actually done and written by the Government of India.' Further, the publication of a note by General Kennedy 'is open to criticisms very similar to those which I have applied to the letter of January 18, and the publication of which appears to me to have been grossly improper. Here, again, the action of the President in Council is grossly misrepresented.'

Sir Henry Norman, having read Sir Alexander Arbuthnot's minute, thought it gave a complete history

of the proceedings of the Council, and he did not see how these proceedings, in the Viceroy's absence, could have been very different from what they were. He did not wish to say anything further about the impropriety of the conduct of the Bombay Government, and concluded a brief minute with the following remarks:—'All I can now say is that we acted according to the best of our ideas as to what was best. Looking back at the correspondence, perhaps some verbal or trifling changes might have been desirable, but beyond this I am not aware that we could or should have acted otherwise than we did.'

The Viceroy also recorded a minute on the subject. At the time Lord Lytton left Simla the scarcity was of a very limited character, and the local Governments were then no better able than the Supreme Government to predict its probable duration or extent. It was his Excellency's opinion 'that they would not be justified in sanctioning either any premature interference with private trade, or the commencement, for purely relief purposes, of public works which the Imperial Government might find, after adequate consideration, that it could neither complete without an expenditure of money greatly in excess of its resources, nor suspend, if once commenced, without a considerable waste of money. His colleagues concurred in these conclusions, and were furthermore of opinion that at the stage of the scarcity with which they were then dealing, it was expedient to start small relief works near the homes of the people rather than large ones remote from the suffering localities. Copies of all subsequent correspondence on famine matters were forwarded to his Excellency, who carefully perused and duly acknowledged them, not only with approval, but also with cordial recognition of the conscientious care with which it had been conducted.'

His Excellency proceeded:—'Now, as regards that portion of this correspondence which was addressed to the Bombay Government, I must here observe that, ever since I assumed charge of the Supreme Government, it has been my earnest and constant endeavour to maintain, both personally and officially, the most frank and cordial relations with his Excellency the Governor of Bombay. Finding that the official intercourse between the two Governments was not altogether free from mutual irritation and mistrust, I have been at some pains to read with care, and occasionally to correct with my own hand, letters drafted on current business of a kind too trivial to engage the personal attention of the Viceroy, had it not been for the Viceroy's anxiety to prevent the inadvertent use of any expression which might appear to him likely to offend the susceptibilities of correspondents predisposed to take offence. But it is my sincere belief that the President in Council could not, consistently with that high sense of public duty which has characterised his long and eminent career, have sanctioned off-hand and in absolute ignorance of the extent and duration of the financial liabilities the Government of India would thereby incur, all applications for the commencement of large relief works first addressed to him by the Government in the latter end of October.'

With respect to the letter of December 15, which gave so much offence in Bombay, Lord Lytton says:—'Believing that the letter was not intended to have this effect, and being also satisfied by the information furnished me on the spot, that delayed action might have injurious results, I at once addressed a private letter to the President in Council, urgently requesting the immediate revocation of this letter; but my letter did not reach Delhi previous to my own arrival there.

I then ascertained that a copy of the letter had been already forwarded to the Secretary of State; but within a few days afterwards, my colleagues in Council agreed to recall that letter, and substitute for it one from which the paragraphs complained of by the local Government should be omitted. It was not possible to draft the substituted letter thus agreed upon previous to the return of Sir Philip Wodehouse to Bombay; but on the eve of his Excellency's departure from Delhi I informed him that the original letter was withdrawn, and that he would speedily receive another letter on the same subject which was to be substituted for it, and from which the passages to which he had called my attention in the first document would be omitted. I took this occasion of expressing to his Excellency my hope that the arrangement thus explained would terminate a correspondence which could not be continued without detriment to the interests of the Empire, under circumstances of serious difficulty, imperatively demanding the loyal and energetic co-operation of all its administrators. His Excellency gave me to understand that the arrangement in question was satisfactory to himself and his Government, and that the controversy it was intended to close would be considered by him as set at rest. My surprise has, therefore, been great on reading for the first time in the local newspapers the resolution of the Bombay Government to which this and the foregoing minutes refer.'

Hitherto the Bombay Government had been subjected to a mere fusillade: now the whole battery of the Council was to be brought to bear upon them. A despatch, signed 'Lytton, H. W. Norman, A. Hobhouse, E. C. Bayley, A. J. Arbuthnot, A. Clark, J. Strachey,' was forwarded to the Secretary of State, and in it the insubordinate conduct of the local

Government was strongly animadverted upon. Paragraph 3 was the most outspoken in the despatch. Having described the facts it goes on to say:—'If the Government of Bombay believed these facts to be true, and if it were acting for the public good under an impression that there had existed some conflict of opinion between the Viceroy and the President in Council, we find it difficult to understand, considering the terrible gravity of the circumstances, how the admitted reconcilement of this assumed difference in a sense favourable to its own views and wishes could have appeared to that Government a proper and legitimate occasion for the public attack thus made by it on the Government of India. The propriety of such a proceeding, under any circumstances, we leave with confidence to the appreciation of your Lordship. But in the presence of one of the greatest calamities recorded in the history of the Empire, it might, we think, have been presumed that a sense of common responsibility would have induced the Government of Bombay to abstain from aggravating any cause of conflict or irritation which could weaken the authority or add to the difficulties of the Government of India. At such a moment it might have been expected that even if the Government of Bombay thought our views erroneous or our conduct mistaken, it would at least have given the Government of India credit for an honest desire to do what it believed to be right, and would not have chosen an opportunity so inappropriate to publish to the world a resolution in which it practically invites the public to share the contempt it feels for our assumed errors and divided counsels.'

Again, in paragraph 5:—'If, therefore, the facts in question had been correctly stated by the Government of Bombay, this would, we submit, have constituted no

excuse for its present proceeding, but would have been, on the contrary, an aggravation of the breach of official propriety committed by that Government. The Viceroy, however, desires to place on record his emphatic repudiation of the position attributed to him by the Government of Bombay in reference to the views which it has misunderstood and the facts which it has misstated. Between the policy approved by the Viceroy and that which was carried out during his Excellency's absence on the frontier under the orders of the President of the Council, there has been no contradiction.'

After a further recital of facts the despatch concludes with the following passage :—'In conducting difficult operations under circumstances so anxious as those with which we have unhappily now to deal, we do not claim for ourselves any immunity from error. We have done, and shall continue to do, our best to mitigate the terrible calamity which is afflicting the Empire, and we know, and cordially acknowledge, that the Governments of Madras and Bombay, and all their officers, are devoting themselves to the same task with an anxiety and zeal which cannot be exceeded. Mistakes will, doubtless, be committed by all concerned, but all have equally at heart one common object, the attainment of which can only be assured by mutual forbearance and cordiality, and a loyal subordination of every other consideration to that of the public weal.'

For a far less serious breach of official decorum than Sir Philip Wodehouse was guilty of, Sir Charles Trevelyan, when Governor of Madras, was recalled from duty. Sir Charles merely recorded a minute against the income-tax, and himself handed a copy to the editor of the *Madras Times* for publication. Sir Philip Wodehouse, on the other hand, deliberately attacks the

Supreme Government, holds it up to scorn and ridicule, and before the resolution in which he does this can be forwarded to the authorities incriminated, it is published in the local newspapers. The Famine Blue Books nowhere contain a copy of the Marquis of Salisbury's despatch in reply to the communication from the Governor General's Council. Yet such a reply must have been sent, and the documents which called it forth having been made public, it was manifestly not right to withhold this reply from publication. There can be no doubt the conduct of the Bombay authorities called for severe reprimand. The high eulogy passed upon their efforts by the Viceroy, instead of strengthening their resolve to do well, overthrew their stability, and they acted unwisely. The publication of the resolution —the writing of it may not have been so bad—was contrary to the etiquette which controls the relations of subordinate to supreme Governments, and it is to be supposed to law also. Had a collector or revenue commissioner acted similarly in defiance of the Bombay Government, Sir Philip Wodehouse would probably have appreciated the grave indecorum of conduct of which he or his administration was guilty. Most probably the blame was his alone, as he was acting by himself in Famine matters. Some months subsequently a despatch was published in which the Secretary of State recognised the good work done by the Bombay Government, but the student of contemporary history feels that there must be a hiatus which the Blue Books fail to supply.

The last word in the controversy, however, had not even now been spoken. Probably, unaware of the despatch and accompanying minutes which had been sent to England, the Government of Bombay essayed a reply to the letter of the supreme authorities dated

February 2, in which they defended the correctness of the orders they had issued. The passages under dispute are taken categorically, and confusion, if not contradiction, is clearly shown. A labour dispute practically amounting to a 'strike' had taken place in one of the Bombay districts, and Sir Philip Wodehouse informed the Viceroy that instances of starvation through obstinacy were not so unlikely to happen as was assumed. The letter continued :—'Some of those who are on strike are comparatively strong and robust, and able for a time to endure privation, but others are weakly ; they appear to be acting in bodies and in concert, and the fear is that before the majority who are comparatively strong are brought to reason, some of the weakly will be reduced to a condition of great prostration. They wander about, and may die out of reach of assistance. The Government, therefore, is placed in this dilemma : if they give way to the people they cannot successfully carry out the policy of the Government of India, in which they concur, of strictly limiting expenditure ; and if they do not give way some deaths may occur. Feeling, therefore, that the rule has been approved by the Government of India, under what they cannot but hold to be too sanguine a view of the case, they will, until otherwise instructed, act upon the positive injunction contained in your 4th paragraph, that no one shall die of starvation if it be in the power of Government to prevent it.'

Replying, at the end of February, to the foregoing letter, and directing attention mainly to the question of the people on strike, the supreme authorities say:—'The Government of Bombay may confidently rely on the support of the Government of India in its refusal to yield to the demands that have been made, and in its determination to introduce a more satisfactory system.

At the same time the change must be carried out with care and caution, and his Excellency in Council has no doubt that this is being done. The most efficient measures that are practicable should be taken to guard against the danger pointed out in your letter, and to give relief in each individual case in which it is necessary. When a man is obviously in danger of dying from starvation, it is evident that we cannot refuse to save him because he has been misled into joining a strike, or has neglected to comply with certain orders or conditions. If, however, after all practicable efforts have been made, the case anticipated as possible by the Government of Bombay should occur, and some of the more weakly should "wander about and die out of reach of assistance," the misfortune will be much regretted, but it will throw no discredit on the Government or its officers. In carrying out the humane policy which has been adopted, the Government does not pretend that it can guard against every one of the numerous risks to life which arise in time of famine, or that it can save everyone from the consequences of his own ignorance or folly.'

With this ended the game of cross purposes between two Governments, after having been carried on for four months.

CHAPTER III.

FAMINE-STRICKEN LABOURERS ON STRIKE.

As the story of the Bombay disaster and the means taken to grapple with it is unfolded, there is a marked falling-off in the suavity which was characteristic of its earlier features. One instance of this has been given in the preceding chapter. Another is manifest in the antagonism which arose between the Sarvajanik Sabha and the Bombay authorities. The society continued for some months its self-imposed and well-performed task of making independent enquiries, but it no longer found itself in perfect accord with the Government. From January to April 1877 its narratives are one prolonged note of complaint; in May it was prepared to acknowledge, and in fact did acknowledge, that things were not so bad as had been anticipated. The fact was the struggle had become exceedingly severe, questions had arisen for discussion, and practical difficulties had developed themselves of a kind calculated to arouse contentious feelings, and such were displayed. The four months now under review formed the period of greatest disaster, tested—and this was a fair test in Bombay—by the number of people on works. They are given in one of General Kennedy's notes thus:—

	On Civil Agency Works	On Public Works Department Works	Total
January 6, 1877 . .	123,829	185,250	309,079
„ 13, „ . .	140,361	196,025	336,386
„ 20, „ . .	134,975	204,464	339,439
„ 27, „ . .	105,014	181,835	286,849
February 3, 1877 . .	83,147	186,626	269,773
„ 10, „ . .	64,815	183,880	248,695
„ 17, „ . .	49,020	178,066	227,086
„ 24, „ . .	41,628	185,930	227,558
March 3, 1877 . .	38,336	175,003	213,339
„ 10, „ . . .	31,091	193,776	224,867
„ 17, „ . . .	20,637	194,514	215,151
„ 24, „ . . .	25,728	212,460	238,188
„ 31, „ . . .	28,293	223,986	252,225
April 7, 1877 . . .	27,081	242,324	269,405
„ 14, 1877 . . .	31,229	260,680	291,909

On January 19, shortly after Sir Richard Temple's visit, the rates of wages on one class of works were reduced—twelve days previously it had been decided that no wages should be paid for Sundays, when no work was done. A contrary rule, it may be remarked, was at this time being made in Madras. Civil agency works were usually situated near the homes of the people, and on them only very light tasks were imposed. The scales adopted for the two systems of relief then stood as follows:—

Public Works Department Scale.

Man.	Woman.	Child over 7 years of age.[1]
1 anna, plus the value of 1 lb. of grain.	½ anna, plus the value of 1 lb. of grain.	½ anna, plus the value of ½ lb. of grain.

Civil Agency Scale.

½ anna, plus the value of 1 lb. of grain.	¼ anna, plus the value of 1 lb. of grain.	¼ anna, plus the value of ½ lb. of grain.

The tasks demanded were respectively, on Public Works Department scale, 75 per cent. of an ordinary day's labour, on civil works 50 per cent. The object

[1] Children under seven years of age received an allowance of ¼ an anna per diem, but did no work.

was to get as many as possible under professional agency, as civil agency works involved waste. For instance, an executive engineer who had travelled through the districts discovered that one of the civil officers had estimated the cost of a relief work which he was desirous of obtaining sanction for at about half a lakh of rupees. The actual cost of the work under skilled control would not amount to one-tenth part of that sum. No doubt had the half-lakh been sanctioned, it would have been spent, and Government would have been losers of a considerable sum of money. In another case an officer had estimated a work to cost about five times the amount that the Public Works Department were ready to undertake it for. Lastly, it had been discovered that a small relief work which cost between three and four thousand rupees gave employment to almost as many petty native officials as workmen. In the face of these examples, it was not surprising that Government were desirous of leaving as few works as possible to civil agency. 'Unless they protected themselves in this way, the famine would cost about twice as much as it ought.'[1]

It will be observed that the sliding scale of payments in accordance with the prices of grain—a measure which does not seem to have been adopted on any previous occasions of famine—had the advantage of equalising the wages paid over all parts of the affected districts, and thus of preventing under-payments in one district and over-payments in another. While on the one hand it secured to the labourer a fixed amount of food in addition to a fixed sum of money, no matter what the state of the market might be, on the other it gave the Government the benefit of any fall in grain rates.[2]

[1] *Times of India* Special Correspondent, February 7, 1877.

[2] Note by General Kennedy.

So early in the crisis as November 20, a system of classification had been adopted; it was as follows:—

'*Class* 1.—The able-bodied men and women, who should, as a rule, be drafted to the works, where there are any such within reach, under the Public Works Department, where the supervision is of a stricter and more effectual character, and where the value and quality of the work performed can be more correctly regulated and estimated.

'*Class* 2.—The less capable, the older men, and the women and children, who may, in larger proportions, be employed on the works under the collector, where the supervision, though it may be less strict, should still be maintained as far as is compatible with the object of the works. The workpeople should not be permitted to idle, and the work done should be regularly measured up, and its value calculated with reference to the expenditure incurred.

'*Class* 3.—People incapable of travelling any distance to work, and incapable of ordinary labour, who should be employed to the extent of their powers on trifling works about their villages, such as prickly-pear clearances, and the like.

'*Class* 4.—The old, infirm, blind, and cripples, who have no one to supply their needs, and to whom it is necessary to give alms for their support.'

A distance test was also laid down whereby it was decided that, so far as possible, people should not be employed near their homes, but should show that they really were in distress by being prepared to go some distance for work. Sir John Strachey is said to have prevented a scarcity in the North-West Provinces from becoming a famine by the distance and other tests. Some two hundred thousand people were then assembled at what a contemporary writer calls 'a great picnic,' being

gathered together by the combined attractions of light work, the liberty of returning to their homes at night, and the wages paid them at a season when in ordinary times they would have to live on their savings. But when the wages were cut down to a mere subsistence allowance, when a full day's labour was insisted on, and when the living at their homes was threatened, these immense crowds melted away as rapidly as they had collected, and it was found that there was hardly anyone really in need of relief. Nothing approaching this could be said of the people employed on relief works in Bombay. If they had not been severely tried and compelled to labour, they would not have undergone such straits as are described in the following passage:—'The labourers on the relief works have no shelter by day or night, and sleep in pits dug in the ground, exposed to the weather, and many have not a rag to cover them.'[1] Independent testimony bore out the accuracy of this statement.

The Personal Assistant to the Governor of Bombay described in succinct but sufficient terms the practical terms of the system under his charge. He said:—

'As the rates of wages finally brought into force were admittedly low, and as the tests of classification, taskwork, and distance were applied with considerable rigidity, it became necessary to provide for particular cases, so that the general arrangements, devised in the interests of the public, and having for their object the prevention of the abuse of State charity, might not press harder on the suffering people than could be borne.

'It was found that the classification, if too rigidly carried out, separated families, and threw an almost insuperable obstacle, in some cases, in the way of those

[1] Famine Narrative No. IV., issued by the Sarvajanik Sabha.

seeking relief on the larger works; it was therefore ordered as regards such cases, that when able-bodied persons were employed on works, their families and immediate dependents, though not themselves able-bodied, should also be received, and the arrangement has since worked satisfactorily; the stronger members of the family having endeavoured very generally to make up for any shortcomings of their weaker relatives.

'Many of the relief labourers had large families of children; some of them were able to work, and all over the age of seven years who were capable of carrying a basketful of earth, were mustered and paid on the works; but the younger children were found not only to exercise a great drain on the scanty earnings of parents; but if admitted indiscriminately to the works, were greatly in the way, and impeded the movements of the elder people; it was therefore determined that as regards the children below the age of seven years, to the youngest infants, regular musters should be taken, and that these children should each receive a small daily payment as subsistence allowance. Also that they should be kept near, but quite apart from, the works on which their parents were employed, and under the charge of a few elderly women, who were mustered and paid for that purpose; and in some cases they were placed under the control of village schoolmasters whose schools were closed owing to the general absence of the people from some of the villages.

'The arrangement regarding the payment of young children made on December 26 has been in full force, and has, except in some few instances where orders were not attended to, worked with success; it has given great satisfaction to the people, and, while it has not added very materially to the cost of relief

operations, it has supplied just what was wanted to supplement the low rate of famine wages.

'It is very probably due to the fact that the allowance to young children has been made almost since the commencement of the relief operations, that the subsistence wage has been hitherto found insufficient. It was feared that a man and his wife, with a large family to support, could hardly sustain himself and his children on the amount he could earn on the works; but when the elder children received payment as labourers, and the young children, even down to infants, were paid a small subsistence allowance, the earnings of all the family[1] became considerable; and, as the results have shown, have hitherto proved sufficient to prevent distress in every case in which the general system of relief inaugurated by the Government has been fully and completely applied. In addition to this advantage, the parents were relieved by the arrangements made of care and anxiety for the children during working hours, and the elder people, generally, were freed from the impediment and obstruction caused by the presence of a number of small children on the work.

'It was also provided that special cases (such as nursing mothers) arising on the works, should be specially treated, and full authority was given to local officers to

[1] The allowance of a quarter of an anna per head per diem for children under seven years of age whose parents or guardians are employed upon the relief works, is paid both by the Civil and Public Works Departments, so that, assuming that there are twenty-six working days in the month, and that grain is selling at 16 lbs. the rupee (and it is seldom so dear as this), a family consisting of a husband, wife, and four children, two over and two under seven years, can earn rs. 7–11–6 monthly on the former scale, and rs. 9–12–0 on the latter, *e.g.*:—

	Man.	Woman.	Two children over 7 years.	Two children under 7 years.	R.	A.	P
Civil Agency . .	1½ ...	1¼ ...	1½ ...	½ = 4¾ × 26 =	7	11	6
Public Works Agency .	2 ...	1½ ...	2 ...	½ = 6 × 26 =	9	12	0

This amount for a family is not less than the earnings of some peons or lower classes of servants, who frequently have as large a family to support.

take action in such matters. Provisions for sick persons, and for their attendants, were ordered, and the cases of transfer from one work to a distant one, and of drafting to a distant work, were met by orders directing that in such instances subsistence batta should be paid.'

Admirably arranged as was the principle by which the Bombay famine was met, it did not suffice to preserve smooth relations with the people who were to be saved from perishing of hunger. Towards the end of January, when all able-bodied men and women were drafted from the easy works to the more difficult tasks, an exhibition of passive resistance took place. Only those were allowed to remain on village works who from age, infirmity, or other good cause were unable, first, to face the distance test, secondly, to perform the tasks required. Many refused to proceed to the works indicated, and thereby discharged themselves from employment. Sir Richard Temple[1] estimated that between January 12 and March 12, 102,000 people discharged themselves from Government employ. He thought he traced in their proceedings a sign of 'some method and system.' They imagined, by suddenly throwing themselves out of employ they virtually offered a passive resistance to the orders of Government. They counted on exciting the compassion of the authorities, and still more on arousing fears lest some accidents to human life should occur. They wandered about in bands and crowds seeking for sympathy. Sir Richard Temple is of opinion they did meet with sympathy in some quarters, and there is no doubt they did—to this extent at least, money was provided for a long telegram to the Viceroy (to be shortly quoted), and to the Secretary of State, and others in England also. The Sarvajanik Sabha is credited by common report with having provided these means.

[1] Minute dated December 24, 1877.

If they did not, their character has been most unjustly assailed. Sir Richard Temple says: 'The people certainly had leaders both from among their own body and from among the *employés* whose vocation had ceased from the contraction or cessation of the village works. Village headmen also encouraged the opposition of the people.'

There can be no question that a strong feeling of resentment against the reduced ration and the taskwork had been aroused. The members of the Sarvajanik Sabha thought their countrymen were not properly treated by the authorities, particularly in the quantity of food supplied. Several of the English journals in India supported them in this objection. One pound of grain a day and half an anna (three farthings) in cash to buy seasoning and fuel, was considered little if any better than prolonged starvation. It was far below the ration of gaol or hospital, and sometimes (though only where arrangements were defective) had to be divided with one or more other persons. Not only was this reduced ration objected to on the ground of cruelty, but the practice was held to be economically unsound, as recipients would be so reduced in condition that when they left the works and returned to their homes they would be unable to cultivate their lands to the extent which, from the taxpaying point of view, was desirable.

The Sabha, in their fourth narrative, 'humbly submitted that a pound of food does not and cannot suffice for this purpose, viz., the maintenance of a civil agency labourer.' The national standard of wages given to semi-slave dependents, the worst class of labourers, was stated to be 2 lbs. a day. This was said to be the quantity absolutely necessary to support human life on the wretched scale in use among the lowest classes, and to force it down lower still would be simply to court death in thousands by the slow torture of starvation.

'A felon convicted of the worst crimes gets on an average two pounds, and it is really surprising how officers engaged on the relief works should have brought themselves to recommend to Government such a reduction of wages. It should be remembered that the same harsh policy which reduced the wages drove away the smaller children from the works, who, till then, had been receiving their small dole in return for their nominal labour. These children, though cast out by Government, will have a prior claim upon the affections of their parents, and many hundreds of poor fathers and mothers will stint themselves out of the pound allowed to support their children. Such a stinting of food will hardly enable the labourers to work at their task, which is fixed to be 50 per cent. of the ordinary quantities of work done in good seasons by able-bodied labourers.' They argued that even Sir Richard Temple did not favour the carrying out of this policy till the necessary steps had been taken to organise house-to-house and village-to-village visitation. This they contended had not been done.

In the same narrative it was remarked, 'These poor people can hardly be charged with making any extravagant demand if they asked during these hot months the wages that have been hitherto paid to them. It is to be borne in mind that these poor people pay out of their labour and earnings more than one half of the entire revenue of the country. They pay the land tax, the excise duties, the salt tax, portion of the customs, more than half the stamp revenue, the local cess and the tolls, and yet, when a bad year comes upon them they are told either to work on wages which starve them of half their food, or they are allowed to die, and the officers of Government are prohibited from rendering them any help. This is a cruel commentary upon the new policy announced by the Supreme

Government, and it is to be hoped that it will never be allowed to work its mischief even for a short time.' The Sabha also challenges the statement of the Sanitary Commissioner of Bombay as to the alleged good health of the people on works, which they denied. They also urged, 'Now that the Delhi festivities have closed, the authorities should take the initiative in an appeal to England for subscriptions in aid of charitable relief.' The Bombay Government simply acknowledged 'your letter, No. 19, dated February 7, 1877, and its accompaniments.'

Whilst the minutes summarised and the letters alluded to were being written, read, and replied to, the people in large numbers were on strike. This feature of industrial life was more conspicuous than would be a similar event in England, as the strikers were all congregated in one or two places, but the contest was conducted with an absence of violence or injury to property or life or limb to the last degree creditable to the malcontents. In the weekly official statements Nos. 13 and 14, issued by General Kennedy, it was said that there was an organised conspiracy on the part of the labourers to resist the economizing policy of the Government by striking for more wages and easier work. The Sabha was indignant at this statement, and remarked:—'Anything like conspiracy or organised strike was so opposed to the information received by the Sabha from the famine districts, and appeared moreover to be so unlikely in the midst of the extreme distress with which these people are afflicted, that the Sabha deemed it to be its duty to make strict enquiries on the spot, by deputing agents specially fitted for such work, before committing itself to a distinct denial of the correctness of the official view on this point. That enquiry has now been completed, and it affords great

satisfaction to the Sabha to be able to trace the so-called strike to its natural causes, and thereby to vindicate the character of law-abiding and long-suffering patience which has secured to the ryots the sympathies of their rulers in their present distress.' These 'natural causes,' briefly stated, were:—(1) The agency for measuring tasks done was insufficient, and the people did not get all they had earned, while payments were irregularly made at long intervals; (2) The order to provide their own baskets, pickaxes, and spades; (3) Separation of families, according to their capability of being tasked; (4) Government officials refusing to send any but gangs of 500 each to large public works; (5) The people had lost confidence in the Department of Public Works officials; (6) Of 10,000 sent to Acti, 8,000 returned because of an epidemic of cholera, and because many hundreds were refused as infirm; and (7) The mode of selection was cruel.[1] They also stated that out of 75,000 labourers who had left the works in one month, only 10,000 had returned. 'Under these circumstances it became the duty of the relief officers to make enquiries as to the fate of the 65,000 people who are wandering in their districts or begging in the large towns, without any adequate means of support.'

Meetings, immense as regards numbers, were held, speeches were made, resolutions were passed, and the telegraph wire called into requisition. The rumour, often circulated, at last proved true, that Mr. Grant was to be removed from Sholapore to Bombay. This caused much dissatisfaction among the ryots, it is said,

[1] 'Blows and boxes are given on the chests of the labourers, and if anybody complains of the pain caused by the blows, he is rejected as infirm. The Mahratta peasantry, with all their faults, have inherited an independence of character, and do not like this idea of being examined as if they were so many cattle brought to the market. Besides, the blows given are not in many cases like the doctor's gentle taps.'—*Sarvajanik Sabha Narrative*, No. 4.

and on January 29 the ryots telegraphed to the Bombay Government as follows:—'The reduction of wages in the civil agency gave great discontent to the workpeople. 8,000 people in the Sholapore taluk are thrown out of employ consequent on the want of works. Mr. Grant's transference has altogether bewildered the townsfolk and workpeople. Their humble request is that Mr. Grant be telegraphed to remain until their application through the post reaches your Excellency.' The reference to the townsfolk shows the local inspiration under which the ignorant villagers, unversed in all matters of agitation, were acting. No response was made to this telegram, and two days after a monster meeting of fifteen thousand people was held, and a message sent to the Viceroy in the following terms:—'15,000 people, representing various sects and classes, including men from towns and works in taluks, assembled now in Mungalwar, have requested us to lay before your Lordship their complaints. The hot season has set in. Water is very scanty. Smallpox and cholera have broken out on the works. The reduction of wages in the civil agency, amounting to an anna per woman and 5 pice per man, makes the daily wage quite insufficient for half food even, and has aggravated the misery. 8,000 in Sholapore taluk alone are thrown out of employ consequent on the want of works.' Reference was also made to the removal of Mr. Grant. Copies of this message were likewise sent to the Secretary of State in England and to several members of Parliament interested in India.[1] The arrangements

[1] The following despatch from the Governor-General in Council to the Secretary of State for India throws further light on the subject:—

'We replied briefly, by telegraph, on March 12, to your Lordship's telegram of the 6th idem, which requested us to obtain confidentially information as to facts alleged in a telegram, signed professedly by ryots of Sholapur and Poona, which had been received by your Lordship and others. A tele-

were excellent, and are proof positive of an organisation behind the ryots controlling their movements, and really responsible for what was done.

The efforts made, however, were of no avail. Sir Richard Temple, in his minute reviewing the famine, pays a compliment to the 'tenacity of purpose' exhibited by General Kennedy. That officer had satisfied himself as to the righteousness of the policy he was carrying out, and refused to budge one inch. The matter was reported to the Government of India, who wired back an answer which, in effect, was this:—'Stand firm. Have received message from malcontents, but have not replied and shall not. Have confidence in you.' Two despatches from the Government of India followed, in which they declared that undue concessions must not

gram in explanation of the facts was also sent to your Lordship on March 8 by the Government of Bombay.

'2. On reference to the Government of Bombay we learn that—

'1st. Wages have not been reduced except on civil agency works. Simultaneously with the reduction large works under Public Works Department were opened, on which old rates were maintained. These works are still available, and ready to take as many people as require relief and will work for their wages.

'2nd. Wages on Public Works Department works, 2 annas, will purchase 2 lbs. of grain while grain is dear, more when grain is cheap. Wages on civil agency works will purchase 1½ lbs. of grain, and so the Sabha's statement is incorrect.

'3rd. Children under seven years of age, whose parents are on relief works, get 3 pies = 1 pice. This is an act of charity or grace on the part of Government, and is given even to infants. Children over seven years of age are employed on works, and draw regular wages according to the scale in force.

'4th. Only one death is believed to have occurred from starvation.

'5th. The Sarvajanik Sabha are interested in the question of remissions, as some of its members are the real owners of land in certain districts.

'6th. They regret the transfer of Mr. Grant from Sholapur, as they have lost much influence by it and by the stricter system of relief which now prevails.

'3. The Bombay Government report, on the subject of the authorship of the telegram, that "it was no doubt sent, as it purports to have been, by the Sarvajanik Sabha—a political association or club, having its head-quarters in Poona and a branch at Sholapur."'

be made 'to combinations of workpeople formed with sinister or self-interested objects; and that although Government was bound to do its utmost to save people from death by starvation, it could not always undertake to save people from death by starvation owing to their own obstinacy and misconduct.' The despatches were immediately published, and, Sir Richard Temple thinks, 'helped to guide the thoughts of the people to subdue any unreasonable hopes which may have been engendered.'

The Public Works Secretary evidently bore little animosity towards the people who had caused him so much trouble and annoyance. Finding they could not prevail against the Government, that all their protests were as unavailing in procuring their desires as the wave is unsuccessful in washing away the rock against which it dashes, many returned to the works; others, however, proceeded to their villages, where they doubtless found some occupation and some means of procuring food. Possibly some were on works who did not need relief, and were among the discontented. The works were intended to provide for those only who were really destitute. Mr. Gibbs is of opinion that many of the better classes of ryots found employment on the works for a time; in an earlier chapter two striking instances in support of this opinion are given. Writing of the condition of the people two months after the strike was over, General Kennedy said:—'Among the people themselves there has been, as far as can be ascertained, little discontent; there has certainly been a marked absence of crime, and their temper and conduct have been, so far, beyond praise. They have been quiet in their homes and docile and obedient on the works, and generally they have evinced much apparent gratitude for the efforts of the Government to assist them. They have, it is true, in a passive

and persistent manner, not infrequently endeavoured to resist the measures of Government, and to avail themselves of any advantage that the character or situation of the relief offered them would afford, and this feeling has manifested itself in several movements which have had all the character of strikes; but it is believed that this has been brought about, not so much by the desire and temper of the people themselves, as by the action of persons who have endeavoured to influence them to demur to the reasonable arrangements of the Government, and who have thereby proved themselves to be no true friends of the people by leading them sometimes into difficulties which they would have probably avoided had they been left to themselves. Many of those who were induced to leave the works when the civil wages were reduced, and who did not desire to make any exertion on the works or to go far from their own villages in search of relief, no doubt suffered much distress that they might have spared themselves; but the class who have fallen into the greatest straits are the emigrants who, leaving the villages in the eastern part of the Presidency, went in attendance on cattle to the grazing grounds in the western ranges, particularly to Belgaum, Dharwar, and North Kanara.'

The difficulties encountered by the relief officers were very great, and called for the exercise of much patience. Mr. Gibbs, in his minute, says that one great difficulty which was experienced at most of the relief centres was to prevent persons who had been restored to health or saved from starvation embezzling, as it were, the money given them for the purpose of feeding them on the way to the relief works to which they were ordered. It was found generally that persons in a state of great distress, often emaciated from want, would go to the relief house, and after having received food and lodging, and, if ill, medical treatment and

extra diet, on becoming restored to health and strength sufficient to perform work, would, on accepting batta to take them to the next relief work, go away wandering over the country, and return to the relief house two or three weeks after they had left it, in as miserable a state as when they were first received. In some cases this was known to have happened three times. Another difficulty which the relief officers had to contend with was from an opposite cause, viz. the obstinacy with which persons almost in a dying condition would go away anywhere rather than to a relief camp. They seem to have felt the repugnance to relief camps which respectable poor in England have to the Union Workhouse. Numerous instances of this nature were brought to the knowledge of Government, who were quite prepared to propose a legislative measure to authorise magistrates to send such distressed people to relief centres, and further, when restored sufficiently to health to enable them to perform work, that they should be transferred to earn their subsistence on relief works and detained there. One extraordinary instance of voluntary starvation was mentioned to Mr. Gibbs by the officer in charge of the Belgaum relief kitchen. A woman who was in the last stage of emaciation from starvation was found lying in the town and was conveyed to the kitchen. She was taken in, and all possible means tried to save her life, but in vain. On the body being prepared for the funeral pile, no less than 60 rs. were found rolled up in her sari, and tied round her waist. Mr. Gibbs also mentions that a case came before Government for the exercise of the clemency of the Crown, in which a father had been convicted of murdering his two infant children by dashing out their brains with a stone, who, in defence, had pleaded that he had done it owing to the difficulty he had in feeding the children because of the famine; and yet he was found

to be in posession of 100 rs., a sum sufficient to have fed the family for a year.

Early in March great attention was paid to village relief, and a resolution of the Government of Bombay, in the Public Works Department, conveys much interesting information regarding the interior economy of village administration. Reference being made to the Madras village relief machinery, opportunity may be taken in quoting and adapting a portion of the resolution to show wherein the two Presidency systems differed. The Bombay Government, in their resolution, say that as regards the organisation for village relief, Sir Richard Temple's description of the machinery which exists in the Madras Presidency very closely resembles the organisation which was available in the Bombay Presidency, and which had been continuously, and, it was believed, beneficially, employed since the commencement of the distress.

In the Bombay Presidency, in each village, there is the patel and kulkarni (in Madras known as reddi and kurnum) *i.e.*, the headman and accountant, who are hereditary officers, necessarily acquainted with all the village families, and in most large villages the office of patel is divided, there being one for the revenue and one for the police work, and in every village these officers can rely upon obtaining efficient assistance from their fathers, brothers, or sons, who either have been, or hope to be, officiators themselves. Office is held in turn by members of the family, under the Village Office Act, commonly called the Wuttundar Act. There are, in every village, also, the village police—who are at the disposal of the patel—as well as the wuttundar mahes, hereditary servants, one of whose duties it is to act as messengers, and in some villages there are posts of the district police.

As far back as November 16, Government had instructed all patels (reddis) as follows:—'You are constantly to go round your village, and when you find any person suffering from extreme want, you are at once to give that person sufficient food for one meal, and should he or she be able to travel, send him or her off to the mamlatdar's (tahsildar in Madras) station. Should the person, from old age, sickness, weakness, or any other cause, be unable to travel, you will report the circumstance immediately, by special messenger, to the mamlatdar, who will arrange for the feeding of the person in your village. Any expense you may incur in feeding starving people before you can communicate with the mamlatdar will be at once repaid you by the mamlatdar.'

Funds were assigned to meet demands of this description, and the village officers were also informed that, 'should any person die of starvation in your village, you will be held personally responsible.'

Subsequently, the reduction of wages, and the more strict imposition of tasks on relief works, drove large numbers of persons away from the works; the village organisation was further strengthened by the appointment, in some of the worst districts, of circle inspectors, under whom a certain number of villages were placed, and whose duty it was to visit every village within their range at least twice a week, to secure vigilance on the part of patels and village officers, and watch the movements of the people not on the relief works.

Immediately above the village officers in each taluk there is the mamlatdar and his deputy, the awal karkun (next revenue officer to the mamlatdar), the relief mamlatdar appointed under the authority given by the Government of India, and the chief constable. In nearly every taluk there is at least one municipality, the members of which have hitherto everywhere dis-

played (both in their public and private capacities) a most praiseworthy desire to second the efforts of Government, and to aid the people, both by organising relief arrangements and by procuring and administering charitable funds.

In some cases, in the worst districts, the assistant or deputy collectors are in charge of one taluk only; and generally throughout the affected districts, a single officer of the above grade has seldom charge of more than two taluks. This was arranged very early in the campaign.

In every district, too, there is a superintendent, and sometimes an assistant superintendent of police, and the general control of the district rests with the collector, and the head of the chain of local organisation is the revenue commissioner. There are none of these officers in Madras, which is a pity ; the want of such an official as a revenue commissioner was greatly felt throughout the whole period of distress.

The Government of India and Sir Richard Temple had not failed to notice how efficiently and successfully the local officers had hitherto performed the difficult and responsible duties that had devolved upon them during the distress, and his Excellency the Governor in Council in a resolution had much gratification in confirming the very favourable view that had been taken by the Government of India of the efforts of these gentlemen. Alluding to them whilst distress was still severe, his Excellency in Council confidently anticipated that success would continue to attend the efforts and precautions which these officers were still taking, on the one hand to guard the interests of the public and prevent waste and imposition, and on the other to protect the people from the distress which no unaided efforts of their own could successfully avert.

The resolution continued:—'It will thus be seen that the village organisation is not less complete in this Presidency than it is in Madras, and his Excellency in Council trusts that the precautions which have been taken to prevent the occurrence of unrelieved cases of distress in villages, or away from the relief works, will prove to be as completely efficacious as they are perfectly practicable. In reviewing these arrangements, attention has above been given only to the civil organisation, but his Excellency in Council did not forget that, working side by side with that organisation, and therefore a hardly less important part in the general arrangements, was the Public Works Department, which had been greatly strengthened in all the affected districts, and which provides work for, and supervises by far the larger number of the relief labourers. The Public Works organisation consists of the subordinate officers, the assistants, and executive engineers, and the superintending engineers of the divisions, 'who acted each in his grade and position in concert with the revenue officers. The arrangements made by the officers of the Public Works Department for the organisation and management of relief labour have hitherto been in every way very satisfactory, and have been acknowledged as such; and the manner in which the camps and sanitary arrangements of large bodies of workpeople have been cared for by the supervising officers has more than once attracted the attention and obtained the commendations of the Sanitary Commissioner, whose own energetic and indefatigable services in connection with this subject have not escaped the notice of Government, and call for high commendation.'

A careful study of the foregoing documents will furnish a key to the difference in the results attained in Madras and Bombay, so far as the distress encountered

in each Presidency will bear comparison. The modes adopted cannot be compared on all points, as the differences in area and extent of distress prevent a close comparison, but more rigorous adherence to the system adopted in Bombay would have prevented much unnecessary expenditure and a great deal of demoralisation, particularly among village officials.

The Government were subjected to much adverse criticism, particularly by those who opposed the 1-lb. ration, because, unlike the authorities in Madras, they did not publish their death-rate at regular intervals, by which an estimate might be formed of the mortality resulting from the famine. It is a pity, in their own interests, that this was not done, as a comparatively small increased death-rate is shown in the figures dealt with by the Governor of Bombay when summing up the general effects of the disaster. The authorities received some compensation for their steadfastness in a letter from the Sarvajanik Sabha, dated May 16. In that document the Committee of the Sabha say they are 'free to confess that their worst anticipations and fears in regard to the condition of the famine districts during the last three months have not been realised, and that the measures of Government, tested by the standard that they were solely intended to save loss of life, have been more successful than was thought possible at the commencement.' The Sabha say that although they had never been slow to acknowledge the 'unexampled beneficence' of the Government in dealing with the famine, it was true that compared with what the Maharajah Scindia was doing[1] over a contracted area the Government standard was low; but at the same

[1] Mr. Gibbs says: 'It is a well-known fact that the princely grants made by Scindia and other native chiefs were distributed almost solely to idle Brahmans and professional beggars, and that the poor starving labourers and artisans got no benefit therefrom.'

time they admitted that when 'the area affected is so extensive, and the population to be fed is counted by millions, it is impossible to exercise indiscriminate benevolence and relieve all sufferings.' In the objects which the Government had set before them it was conceded 'the policy has been eminently successful.' But it is added: 'This success has not been attained without some attendant risks, and Government has confessed its inability to insure against all loss of life. In the absence of any accurate information it is impossible to make any estimate of the number of people who have succumbed to the famine from starvation, cholera, small-pox, and other disorders. Though the death reports and registers do not represent fully the loss of life that has taken place, they still show a total of about 20,000 deaths. Even starvation deaths have not been so rare as the relief officers have officially represented to Government. But, with all drawbacks, the famine relief organisation has worked most beneficially, and judged by the standard set up, its success has been great beyond anticipation.' The third paragraph of the Sabha's letter under notice deserves quotation in full.

'The Sabha humbly submits,' it is remarked, 'that no small portion of the success is due to the attitude of complaint and watchfulness taken up by the native and European press, and native representative associations, and the Sabha takes this opportunity of acknowledging gratefully the kind condescension of Government in drawing the attention of the relief officers to the representations submitted by the Sabha from time to time. In the absence of any constitutional machinery by which the people most intimately affected by the measures of Government can make themselves heard so as to influence the counsels of Government, all independent public bodies have to work under more

or less partial ignorance of the intentions and acts of Government, and their action is necessarily one-sided and oftentimes exaggerated. Moreover, in such extraordinary crises it often becomes the duty of Government in its public utterances to express more confidence than it feels, and to withhold information in order to avoid panic and disorder, and the loss of self-confidence which panic engenders. It must have been for reasons of high policy, such as those indicated above, that the Government have exercised a wise discretion in withholding from the public the information in its possession. Under these circumstances the Sabha feels it to be its duty to refrain from bringing prominently to the notice of Government accounts of local and temporary mismanagement received from its agents. It will therefore, in its present representation, confine itself to such observations as it deems necessary in view of the fact that the worst crisis is over, and that the time has come when steps should be taken not so much to prevent loss of life among the workpeople as to enable them to regain the strength and the resources they possessed before the famine, so that when the rain sets in, they may settle at once into the old grooves and become self-dependent on their own means.'

The working of the reduced ration is then discussed at great length, and, recognising that the greatest pressure was past, much assistance would be needed to help the people to resume their former occupation. 'There is a very urgent demand for additional charity funds. As the resources of local charity have been exhausted, the Sabha submits that the time has come when, as his Excellency the late Governor apprehended, an appeal will have to be made to the other provinces of India and to the public spirit of England to contribute their help to the charity funds.' The suggestion, however,

was unheeded, appeal was not made to England; it was reserved for Madras to make this move three months later. One object, however, had been served by this letter: it revived the *entente cordiale* between the Government and this non-official association. Being human, the authorities appreciated the endorsement of their policy, even though accompanied by some adverse criticism, more than the wholesale depreciation which the previous letter mainly consisted of. The Secretary to Government therefore acknowledged this letter 'with thanks,' and in phraseology nearly twice as long as that employed in April.

The monsoon was due in Bombay early in June, but even in April the people were evincing a great desire to return to their homes. Some difficulty was experienced in restraining this movement, which was considered premature, as agricultural operations could not be resumed in the absence of rain, and there was no grazing for the cattle. However, rain soon began to fall, somewhat out of season, and at least food for cattle would soon be provided. Orders were therefore issued to provide the people with food on their return, and for regulating their journeys and progress through the intervening districts, so that there might be as little distress as possible among them, and so that they might not be a burden on the population through which they might pass. It was anticipated at this time that the loss of cattle had been very great, but there was reason to suppose only the aged, diseased, and worthless had perished, whilst the best had been preserved. No scarcity had been experienced for transport and traffic purposes.

Towards the end of April Sir Philip Wodehouse retired from the Government of Bombay, and Sir Richard Temple, Bart., succeeded to the *gadi*.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CULMINATION AND DECLINE OF THE FAMINE.

THE rains in April were deceptive so far as fitting the ground for the reception of seed-grain was concerned, and the movements of the people towards their homes fallacious. The numbers on works increased week by week till June 9, when the highest point was reached, the total then being 402,540. Of these, 40,507 were on civil agency works, and 362,033 on professionally supervised works. Consternation fell on many minds, and great anxiety was experienced by Government, when, June 5—the due date of the monsoon—passed and no rain fell. Anticipating, however, that the rains would fall before long, nearly 40,000 persons left the works between the 9th and 16th, and returned to their homes. They were rewarded for their faith. Heavy rain fell in many parts of the Presidency, and seed was sown everywhere. The decline in numbers on relief continued till August 4, when a reaction set in, and the total rose nearly 30,000, viz., from 248,492 on July 28 to 293,514 on August 24. Once more the seasons were out of joint. After the first heavy dashes of rain the skies once more became as brass, and for nearly two months no rain fell. Addressing the Viceroy towards the end of August, the Sarvajanik Sabha said that the crops which had been sown were in imminent danger of being burnt up. At that juncture, however, plentiful rains descended, and the great danger for that year was over. Thenceforward the numbers on relief

declined to the extent of from 20,000 to 30,000 per week, until, on November 30, only 10,365 remained on the hands of Government, and it was confidently expected that all relief would cease with the end of the year.

Though the current had steadily set towards decline, there were not a few eddies which brought the worst scenes of distress prominently before the public. Notable amongst these was the state of affairs in Bombay city during the months of August and September. Large numbers of people took to wandering through the streets, spreading pestilence among the inhabitants, and serving to bring the more disagreeable incidents of such a time of disaster to the surface in a place where the greatest possible attention would be attracted to it. A committee of gentlemen exerted themselves to relieve the most distressed, and with the assistance of the police—out of funds contributed by the people of Bombay and by a grant from the Mansion House Fund made by the general committee at Madras—they were relegated to their homes. The mortality amongst them was great, and a peculiar famine disease broke out in their midst. In August Government thought it advisable to stop the immigration of famine-stricken persons into Bombay, and camps were formed for their detention at the Sion Causeway, at a port not far distant, and afterwards at Tanna. For this purpose a discretionary grant was placed at the disposal of the collector of Tanna. To these camps helpless persons who had wandered or were wandering into Bombay were sent, and were there detained and fed, and when necessary treated medically; thence, when they had sufficiently recovered, they were sent, at the expense of Government, to work or to their homes, according to their condition and circumstances.

In July prices had risen to such a distressing rate in Kaladgi that a further modification of the wages rate was found necessary, and it was ruled that, failing the relief that an immediate fall of rain would afford, where the price of staple grain should be dearer than a rupee for nine pounds, wages should be paid for Sundays as well as for week-days, or, in other words, that an increment of sixteen per cent. should be made to wages on all works. In the following month authority was given to all collectors of distressed districts to pay the Sunday wage on works in any taluk where rain still held off, and where the staple food-grain was selling at a rate dearer than nine pounds a rupee. As a fact, such a rate was reached only in the Kaladgi, Belgaum, and Dharwar districts, and in one taluk of Sholapur.

Until the copious rains of August and September fell considerable fear was felt that at least twelve months more of famine would have to be faced, the south-west monsoon being the only one which brings an appreciable quantity of fall to the Bombay Presidency. Plans began to be talked of, but nothing came of them, as their non-necessity was proved. During his journey to Madras, his Excellency the Viceroy remained at Poona for several days. Conferences were held, and among the decisions arrived at was one to give grain preference over all other traffic. This caused much inconvenience and annoyance in Bombay, as hardly any margin was left for other traffic. Sir R. Temple comments upon this decision thus :—

'The inconvenience thus unavoidably caused to the trade of Bombay was very considerable, inasmuch as at this very time the exportation of wheat and oil-seeds to Europe was rapidly developing itself. It is estimated that upwards of 200,000 tons of grain and seeds were thus held back temporarily from exportation. The

quantity cannot be exactly stated, but by some accounts it may have considerably exceeded even this large amount. These circumstances were greatly deplored, but could not possibly be averted, by reason of the supreme law which regards the safety of a vast population, in danger of starvation, as paramount over all other considerations. And if great inconvenience was caused to trade, there was this compensation that great relief was hereby afforded to suffering people, and that large supplies of food were conveyed which could not otherwise have been sent. However, the preference began to be relaxed in the beginning of October, and was finally removed by the end of that month.'

The Sarvajanik Sabha took the opportunity of Lord Lytton being at Poona to present a memorial on the whole subject of the famine. It amounted in bulk to an octavo pamphlet of 24 pages, and was published in that form. The whole ground of famine administration was traversed, and some remarks were made regarding mortality. 'In the absence of any official mortuary returns,' says the Sabha, 'it is impossible to state with any approach to accuracy the actual loss of life that has occurred. As far as can be gathered from available sources, the actual loss of life in this Presidency caused by the famine cannot fall short of a lakh of human beings. This is a much smaller tale of slaughter than the five lakhs officially reported to have died in Madras, but in that Presidency the number dependent upon state support has been nearly five times the figure in this Presidency. The Bombay famine has been, (according to the admission of the Famine Delegate) managed upon more hard, stringent, and economical conditions than in Madras, and the loss of life in this Presidency cannot fall far short of the Madras proportion. The published figures in official statements show that since October

last there were no less than 2,000 deaths in each of the Ahmednager and Canara districts, 5,000 deaths in each of the three districts of Belgaum, Kaladgi, and Sattara, 8,000 deaths in Dharwar, all due to what is officially described as cholera, but which were really caused by what has been now generally recognised as famine diarrhœa, the result of bad or insufficient food. Nearly 2,000 deaths occurred from this disease in the town of Sholapur alone, and about 10,000 in the district from the same cause. Of the deaths in Sholapur, more than 1,000 were registered as those of forlorn strangers, who had been buried or burnt by the police at the State expense. About 5,000 deaths occurred in the Poona district, 1,000 in the city, and 4,000 on the great relief works and in the taluk towns from the same cause. Of the famine refugees who sought shelter in Bombay, as many as 10,000 are supposed to have died from exhaustion, fever, and cholera, thereby increasing more than eight times the usual mortality of the city. These details, though they may not be exactly accurate, can be depended upon as approximating to the truth, which cannot be exactly known because the official machinery in the country districts, far away from the towns, has been disarranged, and it is very seldom that any inquests are held upon the poor victims who succumbed by the roadside, or on the relief works. The Government Returns have been silent on this point, and we appreciate the anxiety of the relief officers to keep back this information, for the publication of it could have done no good at the time, but might have brought on a panic among the frightened population, and unmanned their energies for endurance.'

The memorial was referred by Lord Lytton to the Government of Bombay, and their reply having been received, the following resolution was passed by the

Viceregal Council on October 13:—'His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council observes that in consequence of the improved prospects in the Bombay Presidency caused by the recent rain, it has become unnecessary to pass any orders in regard to the Sabha's anticipations of another year's famine in that Presidency, nor, in regard to the past administration of famine relief by the Bombay Government, is it desirable at this time to enter into such a review of that administration as would be involved in following step by step the comments on it contained in the memorial.'

'The Government of Bombay has,' his Excellency in Council remarks, 'corrected the misapprehension of the Sabha, as to the engineers in charge of works having reported the condition of their labourers to be deteriorating; and has explained that there is little danger of overtasking, since tasks are based on the capabilities of the individual to perform work, and not on any fixed quantity of work to be applied in all cases. In view of the speedy termination of the famine in the Bombay Presidency, the Governor in Council expects that he will shortly be able to submit the final report, in which the subjects touched on by the memorial will be fully dealt with. It would be premature for the Government of India to anticipate that report by any expression of its final opinion, but though the memorial expresses views not entirely in accordance with those recorded by the Government of India, it will receive, when the report of the Bombay Government is dealt with, all due consideration, coming as it does from a body who have rendered good service by obtaining and placing at the disposal of Government much useful information, and by the collection and distribution of the private charity of their countrymen for the relief of the destitute.'

During the month of August the Sabha collected

statistics of interest regarding deaths among the people and mortality among the cattle. One return shows the loss of cattle in the town of Sholapur and is given as follows :—

Number of cattle at first.	Number at present alive.	Number fit for agricultural purposes.
224,599	97,167	44,282

The particulars are meagre, and no statement is made of the means by which these figures were tested. They, therefore, cannot be taken as absolutely trustworthy. They are, however, of value as showing the native estimate of the harm wrought by the disaster. This remark applies likewise to the following tables—they must be accepted with reserve :—

Statistics regarding the comparative numbers of houses and cattle in 15 villages in the Bhimathadi taluk.

Name of village	Number of houses before the famine	Number of houses closed	Number of bullocks	Number of bullocks fit for agricultural purposes
1. Rota	75	23	17	10
2. Hinge	100	30	34	26
3. Kusegaum	95	22	96	66
4. Gara	100	25	54	30
5. Kanagaum	250	65	180	120
6. Kurkumb	200	50	76	49
7. Geerim	132	40	71	59
8. Sonawadi	75	25	28	10
9. Nanavina	25	15	38	24
10. Warwandi	300	65	309	221
11. Devolgaum	80	30	60	55
12. Padavi	65	65	165	131
13. Malthan	100	50	—	—
14. Wasoondi	150	35	41	32
15. Khorewadi	25	13	—	15
	1,772	553	1,169	848

Statement regarding the comparative numbers of the inhabitants and cattle in 14 villages in Madhee and Mohol taluk.

Name of Village	Number of people before famine	Number at present	Cattle before famine	Cattle at present
1. Indapore . .	646	425	600	32
2. Nungaum . .	243	111	30	28
3. Undergaum . .	1,140	425	—	84
4. Nanagar . .	3,752	3,400	1,311	398
5. Anjungaum . .	1,337	170	420	16
6. Upalvi . . .	2,837	2,400	1,000	400
7. Mohol . . .	4,978	2,778	3,542	1,542
8. Pundoora . .	2,000	800	2,000	250
9. Pakharapoor . .	950	600	1,500	1,070
10. Punpari . . .	600	150	1,200	300
11. Asti . . .	3,504	3,019	1,062	425
12. Chikhali. . .	342	100	500	150
13. Saraja . . .	452	300	826	375
14. Patkool . . .	1,800	1,100	2,600	400
	24,581	15,778	16,591	5,470

Statistics regarding the comparative numbers of cattle in the Indi taluk.

Name of Village	Former population	Number at present	Number of Cattle before famine	Number at present
Nimbul Khiveda . .	967	400	2,000	400
" " . .	329	10	300	—
Golasar . . .	1,000	200	500	50
Tambe. . . .	4,000	2,862	2,550	200
Shirpoor . . .	300	50	150	10
Bunkanhâte. . .	1,300	500	800	50
Kengnal . . .	726	150	1,000	150
Balti	640	200	870	100
Shinkunhali . .	926	400	1,203	200
Bhalkunkee . . .	1,839	1,200	1,900	600
Halgoonkee . .	496	50	300	2
Beganal . . .	450	237	418	97
Hoortel . . .	1,384	673	1,944	287
Babalat . . .	600	70	700	55
Choundal . . .	380	80	500	100
Mirgee . . .	950	500	800	125
Padanoor . . .	897	594	753	113
Lachâl . . .	2,533	1,126	2,000	200
Mayanale . . .	207	27	500	15
Ingalee . . .	515	315	300	25
Edolgaum . . .	2,500	1,800	4,000	300
Hunjagee . . .	1,056	56	375	75
Baharajgee . . .	386	75	200	40

Statistics regarding the comparative number of cattle in the Indi taluk.—Continued.

Name of Village	Former population	Number at present	Number of Cattle before famine	Number at present
Boodhehal . . .	405	200	500	50
Salodgee . . .	3,350	2,000	3,000	1,500
Satalgaum . . .	1,100	600	1,000	150
Bencor . . .	1,300	600	900	100
Bolegaum . . .	422	200	209	40
Azargee . . .	2,000	1,600	800	100
Katalee . . .	1,358	800	700	150
Kotanal . . .	325	150	1,000	10
Kathanekele . . .	220	—	320	—
Khedagee . . .	1,038	700	1,000	300
Kalagungee . . .	1,000	300	900	95
Nanda . . .	550	347	457	25
Nundoorgee . . .	912	700	500	150
Dhoomuknal . .	307	75	260	50
Bunganal . . .	682	308	503	203
Nulwad . . .	260	150	260	30
Kachal . . .	359	200	375	100
	39,950	20,005	35,747	5,644

CHAPTER V.

AN ESTIMATE OF THE DISASTER: THE ILL WROUGHT, THE GOOD RESULTING.

Sir Richard Temple closed his famine works before the end of 1877, and simultaneously with this act, penned a minute on the whole campaign. This chapter will be little more than a summary of his minute.

The area over which the distress raged was 34,183 square miles, and the population affected 5,000,000. There were three maxima of distress thus accounted for by Colonel Merriman, who succeeded General Kennedy when the latter proceeded to Madras:—(1) Up to January 1877 the numbers were too great for thorough supervision by the existing establishments, wages were liberal, and the works generally were too attractive. After January the proper remedies were applied by strengthening establishments, reducing wages, and enforcing work. (2) In June the famine was at its height. When the monsoon broke, the demand for Government assistance grew immediately less. (3) In August it seemed that a second season of drought had commenced; at the end of that month the rain came and dissipated the fear. Government relief began as soon as the season had failed, but pressure of high prices had already commenced. It is laid down as a maxim—'So long as relief works are well supervised, it is an advantage to open them at an early date, because that prevents the labouring poor from lapsing into a weak condition.'

From the beginning to the end of the scarcity the activity of private trade in grain was extraordinary. 166,137 tons were imported by the sea-coast (mostly by means of country craft), and 267,863 by rail, that is, by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. The grain-dealers, great and small, possessed a complete organisation, extending from the marts of distant provinces of India to the marts of the affected districts, and thence to every village bazaar. There was, at the outset, some slight trouble at a few places, from apprehended scantiness of supplies, but that soon passed away. With this exception, the grain markets were well supplied from first to last. In some cities, notably Poona, really vast supplies, enough for a protracted scarcity, were known to have been laid in. In every direction the distressed area was traversed by strings of grain-laden carts. Some of the roads were metalled, but many were rough and unmetalled; many crossed low hills; some ascended the lofty sides of the Western Ghât mountains. But the strong-built carts and the sturdy bullocks endured the heavy work; and despite the dearness of fodder, the cartmen kept their draught cattle in serviceable order. Even if the famine had unhappily lasted for a second twelvemonths, as at one time seemed probable, there was every reason to believe that private trade would have proved fully equal to so grave an occasion. It was at no time necessary for Government to import grain, or to organise any transport for private grain, or to reduce the fares on the railways in favour of grain destined to the distressed districts. All that was necessary was to give grain preference over other goods.

The percentage of population affected varied in several districts, thus:—Khandeish, 3·8 per cent.; Nasik, 10·3; Ahmednagar, 8·8; Poona, 23·5; Sholapur, 13·8; Satara, 15·2; Kaladgi, 21·2; Belgaum, 12·3;

and Dharwar 13. Those who received relief mainly belonged to the humbler castes of the Hindu community, and to the class of field labourers, of rude artisans, and of village menials. Mr. Gibbs calls this remark into question, and gives instances of people of better social status than described resorting to the works for relief. Sir Richard thinks the assertion sometimes made, that the failure of a single season, the loss of one harvest, plunges the people into distress, or draws them to the verge of pauperism, can hardly be supported by the facts. He goes on to say that only a moderate percentage of the total population came upon State relief; and that the percentage on the peasant proprietary classes, the real backbone of the agricultural community, was smaller still. In other words, despite the vast loss of crops, despite the misery protracted for a full twelvemonth, the majority of the general population, and almost the whole of the peasant proprietors, sustained themselves without assistance from the State. 'They suffered much with exemplary patience; many received aid from private sources as well as from the State; and some died; still, for the most part, the people supported themselves. Although one year's harvest was destroyed over so large an area, and although the following harvest remained in jeopardy for two critical months, nevertheless the people imported for themselves, without aid from Government, grain enough to keep supplied the grain markets, great and small, for so many millions of souls. How strong, then, must have been the self-supporting power of the people; how large must have been their stores and stocks of food-grains; how extensive their credit; how great their means of purchasing supplies from a distance; how resolute their spirit of self-help! Let anyone regard the magnitude of the losses which befell the

peasantry, and the comparative smallness of the number who sought for help, and then say whether the peasantry of any country would have behaved better, and whether their self-management does not prove that these people were not poor in the sense of being unable to supply their simple wants, but had, on the contrary, after many years of careful revenue settlements and just administration, become well-to-do, in the sense of having more than enough for their actual necessities.' [1]

The numbers on gratuitous relief, *i.e.* Government gratuitous relief, were comparatively small, the proportion at the early stages being large, and at the end a similar state of things existed. The works undertaken consisted mainly of projects of irrigation and trunk roads, on the chord line from Dhond to Manmad; 30,000 persons daily were employed. All the irrigation works were of the highest utility, 'calculated to

[1] Commenting upon this the *Bombay Gazette* remarks: 'The sole foundation for this eloquent passage seems to be the fact that the proportion of the affected population who came upon relief works never exceeded 10 per cent. or, to be exact, 528,951. But it seems to us that before Sir Richard Temple could come to this conclusion, which he uses for the purpose of showing that he is right in compelling the ryots to pay their full land revenue for the whole period of the famine, he was bound to show what the effect of the famine has been upon those classes which did not come upon relief works. He himself acknowledges elsewhere in his minute that the reluctance of all but the lowest classes to accept relief in any shape or form was extraordinary, and it is therefore taking a very shallow and one-sided view of the case to assume that, because nine-tenths of the population did not ask for help, therefore they have not suffered the greatest distress, and even been reduced to the verge of starvation by the famine which desolated the country. This is a subject which might very usefully be inquired into by the Famine Commission which Lord Salisbury has ordered to be appointed. It certainly cannot be considered settled on the strength of Sir Richard Temple's showy special pleading. Let the Famine Commissioners hold a few meetings in Poona and other important stations in the Deccan, and collect evidence from the people themselves as to the state of the country before and after the famine, and let it be well understood that the witnesses who give their evidence will not incur the displeasure of the Government by speaking the truth, and then perhaps we shall know what has actually happened.'

be tolerably remunerative in ordinary times, to permanently improve agriculture, and to protect some parts of the country against famine in future.' Some of the roads are useful, but 'many . . . . are unavoidably left unfinished.' This is the great drawback to works undertaken during a famine campaign.

Fortunately, even providentially, plans and estimates of many projects for irrigation, prepared by Colonel Fife, R.E., were at hand ready for commencement. On these many thousands of labourers were employed.

The total area of all the tanks may be set down at about 21,727 acres, the total length of the canals and main channels at about 502 miles, and the total extent of lands irrigable at about 692,827 acres. The works, however, are not complete, though they may be described as being in various stages of completion. Even in their present state, however, a few of them will afford some useful irrigation. The total expense incurred during the famine on these irrigation works may be set down at 2,800,000 rs., or 280,000*l.*; and the expenditure required to complete them may be estimated at about 6,300,000 rs., or 630,000*l.* The means of providing the money hereafter for such completion has been separately considered in connection with Bombay provincial finance.

In a sketch map attached to his minute, Sir Richard indicates various proposals of irrigation, some actually undertaken, others designed with a view to being undertaken if the famine had lasted. 'The large tanks will fill after the ordinary rains of one year, and will hold a supply of water enough for two years. This is Sir Richard's opinion, but taking into consideration the loss through percolation and the absorption from the surface in a land of such intense atmospheric heat as

India, it is doubtful whether a two years' supply is practicable. Sir Richard adds: 'Thus they would bear one year's drought quite well, would hold out even through a second year's drought, and would become empty only during the third year of continuous drought. Thus they would fail only in the event of three years' continuous drought—an event possible, indeed, but of very rare occurrence, and beyond the range of ordinary misfortune. But if they bear drought for the first year quite well, they would afford a considerable protection to the country against moderate calamities of unhappily frequent occurrence.'

On the whole, in return for the money spent on relief, the Governor of Bombay is of opinion that the State has got a fair amount of work to show. The question is, whether that work is really valuable to the country? 'We may answer that so much of it as pertains to irrigation is highly valuable. Of that which pertains to roads, a part is valuable in a secondary degree, and a part is of little value. Of a total expenditure of about 114 lakhs of rupees, or 1,140,000*l.*, on relief, 28 lakhs, or 280,000*l.*, were spent on irrigation works; 55 lakhs, or 550,000*l.*, on roads; 10 lakhs, or 100,000*l.*, on petty works; 10 lakhs, or 100,000*l.*, on gratuitous relief; and 11 lakhs, or 110,000*l.*, on general supervision and establishments. The expenditure on the two main heads, amounting together to 83 lakhs, or 830,000*l.*, was directed by professional engineering establishments.'

Four paragraphs of the minute deserve quotation *in full*. They are as follows:—

'The relief labourers, as already seen, did not belong for the most part to the sturdy and laborious classes possessing high industrial *morale*. Some few did, and they worked as well as might have been ex-

pected; but the rest were generally spiritless, timid, unmanageable people, quite destitute of *morale*, not very strong physically, and altogether wanting in that sort of capacity which can be advantageously subjected to discipline. Consequently they liked petty works close at home, with easy tasks and loose supervision: they are very unwilling to be transferred to the roads under professional supervision, and extraordinarily unwilling in respect to irrigation works. The reason of their special dislike to the irrigation works was that, the business being very much concentrated on a small area, the control, discipline, and organisation were thorough and effective, more so than was ever possible with gangs of labourers spread over long lines of road. The infatuation of these poor people in respect to eating the bread of idleness; their dread of marching on command to any distance from home; their préference often for extreme privation rather than submission to even simple and reasonable orders, can be fully believed only by those who have seen or personally known these things.

'Though I have gladly testified to the fortitude and self-help of the peasantry and yeomanry, still we know that among them also there were many who would have resorted to relief works and clung to State support had they not been deterred by the prospect of having to fulfil tasks, to march about, to bivouac on the plain.

'There were also many subordinate employés having a sinister interest in the perpetuation of abuses, who set the disposition of the relief labourers against every attempt at reform, who filled the minds of these ignorant people with false ideas, industriously spread malicious rumours, and even sometimes conspired to bring people to the brink of starvation and to produce casual-

ties, and thus to raise public excitement and alarm, under cover of which reform would be frustrated, and abuses would flourish. Repeated experience has convinced me that this form of evil is incidental to any system of famine relief in this country, and demands all the firmness and vigilance that can be exercised.

'Indeed, unless a really strong, competent, and trustworthy staff of officers and officials, of the superior and subordinate grades, can be effectively organised for the control and supervision of relief operations, it is certain that these operations will not only be extravagantly expensive to the State and demoralising to the people, but will bring into existence a train of wonderful abuses, which would hardly be anticipated by any save those who have witnessed these things, and which often lead to the loss of the very lives which the Government is striving to save. The extreme importance of such an organisation is mentioned and reiterated, because there is always a tendency to forget it in the hurry of spreading relief operations broadcast over the country under the pressure of advancing famine.

'As to the rate provided for the labourers, Sir Richard is satisfied that it was sufficient. Week after week, month after month, reports were received from relief officers, sanitary officers, and others, to the effect that the condition of the labourers was not deteriorating. It is now regarded in the Bombay Presidency, by all concerned, as an established fact, that the scale is sufficient, and ought not, in justice to the public interests, to be exceeded.'

The paragraphs relating to gratuitous relief—both official and private—are of great interest. Sir Richard says :—

'The gratuitous relief was never administered at home to any save those who from sickness or infirmity

were unable to move. These were relieved in their houses generally under the village headmen. All other recipients of this relief had to go—some to relief centres to get a daily allowance of food, living as they choose in the neighbourhood; others, the worse cases, to relief camps, where they were accommodated with lodging as well as board. It would be too much to say that no persons were relieved unnecessarily by the village headmen or by the managers of the relief centres. But at the relief camps the inmates were for the most part painfully deserving objects. Thither were sent not only those who, though just able to move, were unable to work, but also those who were picked up, having failed to apply for relief, and who had wandered about the country in an emaciated state. For all these cases "special treatment" was ordered, that is soup, milk, and the like; and in most, though not in all cases, it was effectually administered. Many cases were, however, beyond the reach of restoratives, and succumbed to death. Many, again, recovered, and after recovery were drafted on to relief works. The mortality in the relief camps was considerable, relatively to the number of inmates.

'All relief officers and other servants of Government, and all headmen and other office-bearers in the villages, were enjoined to search for and to bring forward all persons who appeared to be in danger from want. The force of language could not make these injunctions stronger than they were. The distressed districts were parcelled out into moderately-sized circles of inspection for the particular purpose. Over each circle was placed a special inspector. Much depended, of course, on the watchfulness of the village headmen; and accordingly they did much, partly of their own free will, and partly from the pressure put on them by the relief inspectors.

But on the whole they fell short of what was to be expected of them, and in respect of humane watchfulness in so grave a matter they did not fully justify the status assigned to them by the Ryotwari settlement.

'In justice, however, to the circle inspectors and to the village headmen, it must be said that the difficulty was immense of picking up all the emaciated persons who were wandering about the country. This can be effectually done (as we positively know by experience) in well-cultivated, densely peopled tracts, where every village, road, even every by-patch, can be kept under the eye of authority. But this becomes almost impossible in a partially cultivated, sparsely peopled country like the Deccan, crossed in every direction by hills and jungles. The disposition of the people to wander about begging; the unwillingness of so many of them to resort to relief works, or even to relief centres and camps, where food can be got without work; their readiness to run the utmost risk from privation rather than submit to the simplest system of relief, can only be imagined by those who have seen these things. With so many classes of this peculiar disposition, and with a country so unfavourably situated, there need not be any surprise if sometimes the best-directed efforts to prevent starvation in individual instances are frustrated.

'Besides the gratuitous relief afforded by Government, there was much relief of this sort afforded most generously to the suffering poor by individuals acting either individually or collectively. The natives of the more prosperous classes associated themselves together and formed committees for relief, and managed relief camps at some of our largest stations. Reverend missionaries of various denominations rendered timely, sympathetic, and devoted aid, in which respect their experience was peculiarly valuable. Wealthy native

gentlemen gave munificent donations, or established relief houses of their own. The natives generally in the principal places subscribed according to their means. Some large gifts were received from native princes. There was hardly a town, great or small, in all the distressed districts which failed to receive marked benefit from native benevolence in the relief of distress. The European residents, at all the principal stations where they dwell, co-operated powerfully in the good work not only by their subscriptions but by their thoughtfulness in organisation. It is impossible to state the numbers thus relieved by private charity, but they must have amounted to tens and tens of thousands.

'In the city of Bombay itself the charitable organisation was conspicuous, Europeans and natives co-operating with cordial emulation. Though the city was not situated within the area of famine, still many of its quarters were crowded with hunger-stricken people, who had resorted thither, often from distant places, in the hope of obtaining succour. The manner in which all this casual and extraneous indigence was relieved, without any aid from Government, was worthy of the philanthropy of a great capital city. And the efficiency of the proceedings of the Relief Committee was such as might be expected from the eminent persons who voluntarily served on it. The expenditure amounted to 33,138 rs.'

In regard to the probable mortality the minute is not satisfactory. Registration, it is remarked, at the best of times is 'confessedly imperfect.' In 1877, however, it was better than usual, owing to the increased attention given. The following table gives the number of deaths ascertained :—

Districts.	Total deaths from 1st Jan. to 30th Sept. 1877.	Average total corresponding months preceding year.
Khandush . .	21,432	15,828
Nasik	19,511	11,955
Ahmednagar .	22,819	13,571
Poona	23,225	15,225
Sholapur . . .	24,018	10,845
Satara	39,418	18,065
Belgaum . . .	55,618	17,427
Kaladgi . . .	55,409	12,255
Dharwar . . .	61,339	19,303
	Total 322,789	134,474

From this it would appear that the mortality during the nine months ending September 30, 1877, being only 3·9 per cent., was not considerably above what is believed to be an average rate. Even in ordinary times the annual ratio of mortality may be about 3 per cent.; indeed 3·5 per cent. is the exact average ratio taken from the sanitary records.

'It will, however, be seen that the mortality return for 1877 is much greater than that returned for the preceding five years. But the mortality thus returned for the five years is incredibly low, being only 1·7 per cent., and must be wrong—the error doubtless arising from imperfections in the registration, which thus vitiate the comparison. As just stated above, the registration is comparatively a new thing, just emerging from its infancy, and is even yet but imperfectly developed. It has been much improved of late, especially during 1877, by reason of the increased vigilance directed towards the subject of mortality. There is no use in comparing the 322,789 with the 134,474, because the latter sum 134,474 is manifestly below the reality.

'Then comes the question, whether any, and, if so, what, part of the mortality of 1877 arose from starvation or want? If the returns be accepted, then the mortality of 3·9 per cent. being somewhat near a

moderate average, would leave very little to be attributed to starvation. But they cannot be fully accepted, the registration being still so imperfect ; and many will fear that the ratio thus shown must be less than the reality.'

A table is given showing the deaths from small-pox and cholera during 1877. The totals are: from small-pox, 18,939 ; from cholera, 41,520; total, 60,459. The average in the preceding five years was 18,149. How small-pox arose is not known, 'its origin is obscure.' Cholera, in all probability, was aggravated by drinking bad water from wells and springs. The two previous years, however, had both been bad cholera years, not only in Bombay, but also in Madras. The deaths in relief camps and houses reached 49,187.

'On the whole,' says Sir Richard, 'the mortality recorded in the above tables, though greatly to be deplored, is not considerable in comparison with the total number of the general population. In various places deaths of individuals from starvation have been specifically reported, and have naturally excited pity. But the sum total of all such reports, however lamentable, would not represent any considerable statistical fact. The fact, however, of a few cases being found at some of these places which came under our immediate observation would indicate that there must have been some cases at least in many parts of the distressed districts. It is impossible to give any accurate notion of the number of deaths among those who wandered about the country, and those who emigrated to places distant from their homes. Such deaths would often occur in the jungles, or in spots remote from human habitation, and would hardly be reported. But we are constrained to believe that they must have been numerous.'

The sum of the foregoing remarks is in this wise.

'If reference be had to the mortuary statistics, no evidence is perceptible of any considerable mortality from starvation; on the contrary, the presumption is the other way. Nevertheless, we know that some deaths did occur, and we apprehend that many deaths must have occurred; many, that is to say, in the abstract, but not many, it is hoped, relatively to the population. The manner in which agriculture revived when the rains began to fall after the long drought, the extensive ploughing and sowing, the fine harvest raised, seem to oppose any supposition to the effect that there could have been any remarked diminution of the agricultural population. Further light may be thrown on this subject by the census to be taken hereafter in selected areas and tracts in the recently distressed districts. Meanwhile we can only say that the Government does not as yet possess evidence to show that there was any considerable mortality from starvation.'

Mr. Gibbs was not satisfied with the figures given and the deductions drawn therefrom by Sir Richard Temple. He prepared several tables of his own, in which he showed that 'the total deaths in the first nine months of 1877 were about two and one-eighth times as many as in the same period of 1876, and twice as many as in 1875.' He also shows that more than half the deaths (322,839) in the affected districts occurred in Belgaum, Dharwar, and Kaladgi. This, he thinks, may be accounted for by the following causes:—

1. These districts are surrounded by Native States and the Nizam's dominions.

2. From the emigration of persons in the last stage of destitution from foreign States and also from Bellary in Madras.

3. From wanderers to the Kamara jungles (the Mullard) returning thence in a fever-stricken state.

4. The clinging to their own villages by the low-caste Máhárs and Màngs, and their disinclination to go to relief works or to famine relief centres for treatment.

5. The insufficiency of cooked food, and the large consumption of raw grain which prevailed and which tended to produce fatal diarrhœa.

6. The general unhealthiness of the districts—(1) from the failure of rain, and (2) from the subsequent heavy rains, which brought sickness and death to many who had suffered from want.

One important fact established is that the people who went on the works were preserved. There were disease and death, but these, it is contended, were held in check even by the reduced ration, which was so greatly condemned. These speculations in mortality—for they are confessed to be little more than speculations—will need to be checked by the results of the test census taken in March 1878.

On the subject of land revenue and the cost of the famine, Sir Richard Temple must be allowed to express himself in full. He says :—'The land revenue endangered in Bombay Presidency by the drought of 1876 and 1877 amounted to 262 lakhs of rupees, or 2,620,000*l*. This is exclusive of Sind, where a different system prevails. The land revenue of the nine districts where the famine, as described in this minute, arose, amounted to 14,078,500 rs., or 1,407,850*l*. But at one time or other during 1876 and 1877 the whole, or nearly the whole, of the land revenue of the Presidency was more or less endangered. From the very first, that is, in January 1877, when Famine Delegate, I represented to the Government of Bombay the expediency of only suspending the collection of the land revenue in these districts, and of refraining from making any promises to the people of remission. It was under-

stood at that time that large remissions had been recommended, although the exact amount of such remissions had not been settled. It was apprehended, however, by many at the time that from 40 to 50 lakhs of revenue, 400,000*l.* to 500,000*l.*, might have to be remitted. Afterwards the Government agreed to suspend only, and not to remit, nor promise to remit, save a few exceptional cases. On joining the Government on May 1, I found that very few remissions had been granted. A large sum, about 50 lakhs of rupees, or 500,000*l.*, had, however, been justly held suspended from collection until the result of the seasons could be more clearly seen. Entirely concurring in that policy, I fully carried it out, with the concurrence and support of my honourable colleagues. We got in all we fairly could, reducing the 50 lakhs suspended to 30, and then to 27 lakhs. We knew, of course (June 1877), that the people could not then pay the 270,000*l.* or 300,000*l.* of land revenue held in suspension and regarded as the outstandings of 1876–77. But we hoped that they might be able to do so hereafter, if the summer rains of 1877 should prove propitious. There were, indeed, some few cases where collection of the suspended revenue was hopeless, and in these remission was granted. But the total thus remitted did not exceed 21,600*l.*, or two lakhs 16,000 rs. Then the summer rains began to come, and afterwards ceased coming. Consequently, up to the end of August our hopes of collecting the outstanding 270,000*l.* for 1876–77 became fainter and fainter. Indeed, fears arose that some of the revenue for the current year, 1877–78, might have to be suspended in addition. However, the season took a turn for the better from about September 1, and we perceived that the revenue for the current year, 1877–78, would be safe. We then immediately instructed our collectors to

collect fully for 1877–78, to keep their eye on the 270,000*l.* outstanding for 1876–77, and to collect that as soon as might be practicable after realisation of the land revenue for the current year, 1877–78. These outstandings might, it was hoped, be collected during this last-named year, or, at all events, during next year, 1878–79, if the summer rains of 1878 should be propitious.

'The October rains have been so abundant that we learn that the collectors will, after all, be able to get in much of the outstandings (270,000*l.*) during the current year, 1877-78. This we have accordingly ordered, adding that whatever may remain uncollected is to be got in as soon as possible after the rains of 1878. If no more bad or unseasonable weather supervenes, it is not over-sanguine to say that by next spring, 1878, nothing out of the outstandings will remain to be collected, save a residue which will come in during the ensuing summer. In that case the loss of land revenue during the famine of 1876 and 1877, in the Bombay Presidency, will not exceed three lakhs of rupees, or 30,000*l.*—a loss which is comparatively insignificant, as it will be remembered that the revenue endangered by the failure of harvests amounted to 262 lakhs of rupees, or 2,620,000*l.* The loss, therefore, will, as we now hope, be merely one per cent. It is remarkable, too, that owing to revision of settlements the land revenue demand during these very years of scarcity has gone on slightly increasing. On the whole, our present trust is that the land revenue of the Bombay Presidency will virtually not have suffered at all from the famine. Till this happy result shall have been fully attained, the final verdict may be withheld; it will, however, be attained if, under Providence, we are spared any further calamity in respect to the seasons. In that case it will reflect credit on the ryotwari system

and the revenue survey and settlement of Bombay; on the resolute, manly, and industrious character of the natives of the Deccan; and on the discrimination and steadiness evinced by our revenue commissioners, our collectors, and all our revenue officers.'

'The expenditure caused by the famine has been already indicated in this minute. It may be recapitulated here:—

Relief Works	Gratuitous Relief	Establishments	Total
9,300,000 rs. or 930,000*l.*	1,000,000 rs. or 100,000*l.*	1,100,000 rs. or 110,000*l.*	11,400,000 rs. or 1,140,000*l.*

'The estimate of expenditure on direct relief made by the Government of Bombay during the spring of 1877—with which an estimate made by me as Famine Delegate about the same time substantially corresponded—amounts to 116 lakhs. This was framed under the supposition that the rains of the summer would be seasonable. When these began to prove very unseasonable, a further revised estimate of expenditure was made, amounting to 129 lakhs. Under all the circumstances, the comparison between the estimated and the actual expenditure appears favourable, and shows that every endeavour was made by the relief officers to maintain economy.

'Besides this, as already shown, there are 216,000 rs. or 21,600*l.* of land revenue remitted, and 27 lakhs, or 270,000*l.* held in suspension, most of which we hope to recover within a few months, and the remainder within a year. The 21,600*l.* remitted should be added to the expenditure in counting the cost of the famine. There is also a loss of 40,700 rs., or 4,070*l.*, in Abkari revenue.

'The cost of the famine, then, may be approximately set down thus :—

Expenditure	Loss of land revenue	Loss of other revenue	Total
1,14,00,000 rs. or 1,140,000*l.*	2,16,000 rs. or 21,600*l.*	40,700 rs. or 4,070*l.*	1,16,56,700 rs. or 165,670*l.*

'Against this, however, there may be taken as a set-off the increased revenue from the guaranteed railways.

'In estimating this it must be borne in mind that the fact of the G. I. P. Railway having been taken up to so large an extent with the carriage of grain to the famine districts undoubtedly prevented its carrying a portion of the general trade of the country from which it would otherwise have derived revenue.

'The actual increase in the profits from passengers and goods on the Bombay railways in the twelve months ending October 15, 1877, during which period there was a brisk traffic on the railways in famine grain, over those of the preceding twelve months, may be taken at :—

G. I. P. Railway	63 lakhs.
B. B. and C. I. Railway . . .	4 „
Total	67 „

but considering that the foreign export trade in grain and seeds from Bombay was greatly stimulated during the year, it would probably not be far wrong to assume that had there been no famine, profits would still have increased on the G. I. P. Railway to the extent of 30 lakhs, and on the B. B. and C. I. Railway to the extent of 2 lakhs. Deducting these sums, the profit due to the famine may be taken at :—

G. I. P. Railway	33 lakhs.
B. B. and C. I. Railway . . .	2 „
Total	35 „

'The net cost of the famine, then, would come out thus:—

Total expenditure and loss of revenue together	Deduct gain by railway revenue	Net cost
1,16,56,700 rs. or 1,165,670*l.*	35,00,000 rs. or. 350,000*l.*	81,56,700 rs. or 815,670*l.*

'But out of the expenditure incurred, 28,00,000 rs., or 280,000*l.*, have been spent on irrigation works, as shown in this minute, which are works of prime necessity, which had long been in contemplation, and which sooner or later must have been undertaken. If the actual value of these works, estimated at 21,00,000 rs., or 210,000*l.*, were deducted from the net cost, the remainder would be 60,56,700 rs., or 605,670*l.*'

The financial results thus described are eminently satisfactory. The famine in Bombay will be found to have nearly paid the expenditure incurred upon it. So far as can be at present gathered this result has been arrived at with a comparatively small mortality. Complaints are made that the famine works were closed too soon, and that no account was taken of the thousands of people who needed rehabiliting in everything connected with daily life and occupation. But no facts have accompanied those complaints, as no enquiry preceded their being made. One thing is clear from the story of the famine campaign and how it was fought in Bombay, viz., that the true principle of meeting such frequently-recurring disasters in India has been found. The lessons to be learnt from it have been succinctly expressed by Mr. Gibbs, and the present writer desires to add his testimony as an observer of famine administration in Madras to that of Mr. Gibbs, who had a share in what was done in Bombay, that the wise policy for dealing with famine is this:—

1. The Public Works Department should be prepared with useful schemes for irrigation, railroads, or roads, which might be carried out as money becomes available, or be held in readiness for an emergency like that through which the country has just passed.

2. A Famine Act should be prepared and passed under which magistrates should be permitted to send sick and starving men to relief houses, and healthy labourers, unable to support themselves, to relief works, and keep them there.

3. The entire charge of the famine works and famine relief should be centred in one, and that the Public Works, Department.

4. Lastly, it should be remembered that on a famine occurring the sooner relief works are organised and commenced the sooner is the check to weakness and starvation set up; and should such works be of a useful character, even if rain unexpectedly fall and the severity of the famine cease, they can be stopped at any time, with the certainty that what has been done will afterwards prove of value, and the expenditure incurred will not be money thrown away.

Leave cannot, perhaps, be better taken in this record of the disaster in Bombay than with the words by which Sir Richard Temple concludes his minute. The Governor of Bombay has been severely blamed—unjustly perhaps—by a portion of the Indian press for the moral he draws from the calamity. He says:—'In conclusion, while lamenting the loss of those who have perished, and pitying the misery and privation endured by so many, we may hope that the people have learned a hard lesson of self-dependence, that the relations between them and the servants of Government have been drawn closer, that their gratitude will have been

excited towards the Government itself, and that a fresh impetus has been given towards that material improvement of the country which is the best safeguard against famine in future.'

The Men who fought in the Bombay Campaign, as given in a Minute by the Hon. Sir R. Temple, Bart., G.C.S.I., Governor of Bombay, in the Famine of 1876 *and* 1877, *in the Bombay Presidency.*

The grateful task now devolves on me of recording for the consideration of my honourable colleagues the special or distinguished services of the officers, civil and military, in the Bombay Presidency during the famine of 1877.

Our thanks and acknowledgments are due, firstly, to Major-General the Honourable M. K. Kennedy, R. E., as Secretary to Government and Chief Engineer, for devoted and able assistance rendered to Government in its efforts to organise a system of relief suitable to the existing circumstances; to adapt thereto the professional and non-professional resources of the State; to develope suitable projects of public works; to obtain an adequate return in the shape of good work done for the expenditure on relief; to ensure village inspection being carried out for the prevention of mortality among the poorest classes; to ensure on the one hand the safety of the people, and on the other hand economy of the public expenditure. In all these respects he showed a tenacity of purpose and a capacity for administration which have proved most valuable to the Government he served.

To our Chief Secretary, the Honourable E. W. Ravenscroft, C.S.I., we are much indebted for diligent aid rendered to us in supervising the collection of the land revenue which was to so large an extent for some time jeopardised by the drought; in issuing orders from time to time adapted to the changing phases of the calamity; in ensuring that the fiscal rights of the State should be jealously guarded, while the people were preserved from a greater pressure than they could reasonably bear.

The two Revenue Commissioners of the Central and Southern Deccan, Mr. E. P. Robertson, C.S., and Mr. A. E. D. Grey, C.S., zealously and ably sustained the extensive charges entrusted to them, superintending the formation of establishments scattered over a large area of country, and studied the working of the instructions received from Government both in regard to the interests of the State and the welfare of the people.

Colonel the Honourable W. C. Anderson, Commissioner of Survey and Settlement, rendered valuable aid with much exertion and self-sacrifice in inspecting the relief operations in the Kaladgi district at a trying and critical time.

The Sanitary Commissioner, Surgeon-Major T. G. Hewlett, has been most useful to the Government throughout the relief operations, by visiting, in all parts of the distressed districts, the relief camps and centres and the relief working gangs; by observing the physical condition of the rural population wherever to be met with; by gauging the symptoms of distress, by testing the returns of mortality, and by advising the authorities as to the sufficiency of the wages and rations; evincing in all these respects devoted effort skilfully directed in the cause of humanity.

As Chief Engineer for Irrigation and Under Secretary to Government, Colonel C. J. Merriman, R.E., displayed high professional skill and judgment in applying previous projects of irrigation to the requirements of relief and in arranging new projects, and administrative ability in devising means of exacting a due tale of work from vast gangs of relief labourers. He has ably discharged the duties of the Famine Secretariat since the departure of General Kennedy for Madras.

Colonel H. F. Handcock, R.E., Consulting Engineer for Railways and Under Secretary to Government, afforded constant aid to Government in bringing the full power of the railways to bear upon the transport of food grain to the distressed districts, and in devising, in concert with the railway company, the complicated measures needed for this most important object.

Mr. C. G. W. Macpherson, C.S., served as Additional Under Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, during the greater part of the relief operations, and rendered valuable service in the preparation of the numerous instructions necessary for those engaged in the work, and in the punctual collation of the extensive statistics. On his departure for Madras he was succeeded by Mr. G. C. Whitworth, C.S., who conducted the duties to the end of the famine period in a highly satisfactory manner.

Mr. G. Norman, C.S., Mr. J. G. Moore, C.S., Mr. J. B. Richey, C.S., as Collectors of Poona, Satara, and Dharwar, respectively, held their districts well in hand, permitting neither too much to be done nor too little, organised extensive relief establishments, adapting them to the needs of various localities, and while watching the signs of deepening distress, compelled the people to submit to system.

Mr. A. H. Spry, C.S., as Collector of Kaladgi, held one of the hardest posts in the whole of the relief operations, and had to fill

a position beset with difficulties, which he combated with devotion and with some measure of success.

The Public Works Department (including Irrigation and Railway Departments) co-operated most heartily and efficiently with the civil officers in duly and properly employing the distressed people, and bore an honourable share in the labours of the time, and in whatever degree of success may have been achieved—thereby affording a signal instance of the important use to which professional establishments may be put on these grave occasions. Where so many officers of various grades have done well, it becomes difficult to make a selection. But from a long list of meritorious men the following may be chosen :—

Lieut.-Colonel I. M. Greig, R.E. (Dharwar) employed very large gangs of relief labourers on road works, judiciously concentrating them on particular lines of road, and rendering their labour remunerative to the State.

Major B. H. Mathew, R.E. (Sholapur and Kaladgi) showed remarkable ability and firmness in dealing with large numbers of untrained labourers, and in teaching them to submit to professional discipline.

The following officers of the Public Works Department also merit marked praise for their conduct during the relief operations :—Mr. W. B. Christie, C.E., Sholapur; Mr. W. H. Scott, C.E., Dharwar; Lieut. W. W. B. Whiteford, R.E., Belgaum; Mr. A. G. Reed, C.E., Kaladgi; Lieut. W. G. Lister, R.E., Dharwar; Lieut. J. Neville, R.E., Kaladgi.

In the Irrigation Department the following officers have been commended on various occasions throughout the famine period for zealous conduct, and for making satisfactory arrangements for the organisation and management of relief labour and for attending to sanitary and other matters in the camps of large bodies of workpeople :—Major C. B. F. Penny, R.E., Satara; Mr. J. E. Whiting, M.A., M.I.C.E., Poona; Mr. W. Clarke, A.B., M.I.C.E., Poona; Mr. H. G. Palliser, C.E., Belgaum and Dharwar; Mr. C. T. Burke, B.E., A.I.C.E., Sholapur; Mr. A. Davidson, A.I.C.E., Satara; Mr. R. B. Joyner, C.E., Poona; Mr. A. McD. Salmon, C.E., Sholapur.

Mr. W. C. Hughes, C.E., rendered constant and valuable aid in his capacity of Personal Assistant to the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

In the Railway Department Mr. A. Izat, C.E., evinced high professional capacity and great executive energy in rapidly aligning and constructing the chord railway between Dhond and Manmad.

Mr. E. H. Hallum, C.E., also deserves special mention.

Some of the hardest work in all the relief operations devolved on

the junior civil servants; no officers have more uniformly distinguished themselves throughout the relief operations from beginning to end than these. Inasmuch as extraordinary pains have been taken by the State for the choosing and the training of this very important class of public servants, it is very satisfactory to find that they come out so excellently well in time of great trial and hardship. In respect of talent for administration, of thoughtfulness for the people, of devotion to arduous duty, I would name specially the following out of a long list of officers who have acquitted themselves creditably:—Mr. A. Koyser, Poona; Mr. J. K. Spence, Belgaum; Mr. E. J. Ebden, Dharwar; Mr. A. Wingate, Kaladgi; Mr. A. B. Steward, Belgaum; Mr. W. H. Horsley, Kaladgi; Mr. H. A. Acworth, Sholapur; Mr. C. E. Ozanne, Poona; Mr. J. Davidson, Sholapur; Mr. A. L. P. Larken, Poona; Mr. A. Shewan, Satara; Mr. H. F. Silcock, Kaladgi.

The following Deputy Collectors have been specially mentioned:—Mr. Shankar Pandurang Pandit, Kaladgi; Mr. Darahsa Doshabhai, Sholapur; Rao Bahadur Ramchandra Bapuji, Kaladgi; Mr. Ramchandra Sakharam Gupte, Sholapur; Mr. Appaji Raoji, Ahmednagar.

The following officers of the Revenue Survey Department detached for famine duty deserve special mention:—Captain G. Coussmaker, Belgaum; Mr. F. T. Willaume, Kaladgi; Mr. W. M. Fletcher, Poona; Mr. A. B. Fforde, Ahmednagar.

The services rendered by Mr. Walton, Cotton Department (Dharwar), have been prominently noticed.

In the Medical Department the following officers have been commended:—Surgeon R. Bowman, Sholapur; Surgeon W. Nolan, M.D., Deputy Sanitary Commissioner, N.D.R.D.; Surgeon R. M. Wall, M.D., Deputy Sanitary Commissioner, S.D.R.D.; Surgeon J. P. Greany, M.D., Kaladgi; Assistant Surgeon DeLima, Dharwar; Assistant Surgeon J. A. DeSouza, Satara.

The conduct of the following native officers has received marked commendation:—Rao Saheb Tukaram Ramdin, Ahmednagar; Rao Saheb Nathu Bapuji, Ahmednagar; Rao Saheb Keshaorao Ganesh, Ahmednagar; Rao Saheb Ganesh Bhivrao, Poona; Rao Saheb Vishnu Wasudeo, Poona; Rao Saheb Mahadeorao Pandlik, Poona; Rao Saheb Vasudeo Balal, Sholapur; Rao Saheb Moro Bhaskar, Sholapur; Rao Saheb Narayan Balal, Sholapur; Rao Saheb Balwant Sitaram, Satara; Mr. Deorao Krishna, Satara; Rao Saheb Hanmant Ramchandra, Kaladgi; Rao Saheb Balaji Venkatesh, Kaladgi; Mr. Lingo Dhondadeo, Kaladgi; Mr. Keshor Ramchandra, Kaladgi; Mr. Kalyanrao Sitaram, Kaladgi; Rao Saheb Govind Sakharam, Belgaum; Rao Saheb Krishnarao Balal, Dharwar; Rao Saheb Gopal Ganesh, Dharwar; Rao Saheb Gururao Ramchandra, Dharwar.

To the agents, Mr. LeMesurier and Mr. Barnett, to the traffic manager, Mr. Conder, to the locomotive superintendent, Mr. Jackson, and to the servants of all grades of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company, the Government and the country are under the greatest obligations for their unflagging exertions day and night, in the time of trouble, to carry the food grain for the famishing people. The wear and tear of body and mind caused by such sore and long-sustained effort will be fully known only to those who witnessed it. The vast quantity of grain carried by this railway has been already stated. It is difficult to measure the value of the railway at such a time as this, or the magnitude of the calamity which, without it, must have supervened. If these events had happened before the construction of this railway, the misfortunes of the people and the responsibilities of Government would have been indefinitely aggravated.

MYSORE

MYSORE.

CHAPTER I.

THE PROVINCE OF MYSORE; FAMINE BEGINNINGS.

THE province of Mysore, though within the tract of the famine, being situated between the distressed districts of Bombay Presidency on the one hand, and bordered by the most severely afflicted portions of Madras on the other, for a long time after it was recognised that famine was in the land, attracted but little attention. It was overshadowed by the greatness of the calamity on either side. Depending, like other portions of Southern and Western India, upon the south-west monsoon for its main water supply, when the seasonal rains failed, distress was inevitable. Mysore is a native State, and for some years—during the minority of the youthful raja—has been under the direct control of the Government of India, which was represented by a chief commissioner, the raja meanwhile being placed under the care of a guardian, and educated for the important position he would afterwards have to fill. In the period under review, Mr. C. B. Saunders, C.B., was chief commissioner, being preceded in office by Mr. R. A. Dalyell as acting chief commissioner.

The State of Mysore occupies a position well defined, in the South of India, and has been termed a rocky triangle; a not inapt description. It is a table-land

situate in the angle where the Eastern and Western Ghat ranges converge into the group of the Nilgiri hills. Almost on every side it is encircled by mountains, 'on whose shoulders the plateau which constitutes the country rests.' The general elevation rises from about 2,000 feet above sea level along the northern and southern frontiers; to about 3,000 feet along the central water-parting which separates the basin of the Krishna from that of the Kaveri and divides the country into two nearly equal parts. But the surface is far from preserving the even character suggested by the designation of table-land. The face of the country is everywhere undulating, much broken up by lines of rocky hills or lofty mountains, and scored in all parts by *nálas* or deep ravines. There is probably not a square mile in the whole superficies absolutely flat or level, the slope of the ground ranging from 10 to 20 feet per mile in the more level portions, and as high as 60 and 80 feet elsewhere.[1]

The Malnad, or wet country (a name derived from the heavy rainfall which prevails there), lies to the west, and is confined to the tracts bordering or resting on the Western Ghats. It is a land of magnificent hill and forest, presenting alternations of the most diversified and charming scenery. A fertile soil and perennial streams clothe the valleys with verdant cultivation. The sheltered hill-sides are beautiful with waving woods, which give shade to numerous plantations of coffee. Higher up are swelling downs and grassy slopes, dotted over with park-like groups of trees. Above all the gigantic mountains rear their towering crests in every fantastic form of peak. Human dwell-

[1] For these and other facts relating to the physical features and social condition of Mysore, I am indebted to a Gazetteer compiled for the Government of India by Mr. Lewis Rice, Director of Public Instruction, Mysore and Coorg.

ings are few and far between. A cottage here and there, picturesquely situated on the rising ground bordering the rice fields, and hidden amid plantations of areca palm and plantain, marks the homestead of a farmer and his family. Towns there are none, and villages of a dozen houses rare. The incessant rain of the monsoon months confines the people to their own farms. Hence each householder surrounds himself with all he needs, and succeeds in making himself to a great extent independent of the external world. The conditions of this isolated life are insupportable to immigrants from the plains. But by far the greater portion of the province, or all to the east of a line from (say) Shikarpur to Periyapatna, belongs to the division of Maidan (a plain), Bailshime, or open country. Although much of the intermediate region partakes of the characteristics of both, the transition from the Malnad to the Maidan is in some places very marked. Dense forests, which shut in the view on every hand, give place to wide-spreading plains, the solitary farm to clustering villages and populous towns. Man meets with man, the roads are covered with traffic, and the mind feels relief in the sympathy of numbers.

The means of water supply and the prevailing cultivation give the character to the various parts of the open country: the level plains of alluvial black soil, as in the north, growing cotton or millet; the districts irrigated by channels drawn from rivers, as in the south and west, displaying the bright hues of sugarcane and rice-fields; the lands under tanks, filled with gardens of cocoa and areca palms; the higher-lying undulating tracts of red soil, as in the east, yielding ragi and the common associated crops; the stony and wide-spreading pasture grounds, as in the central parts, covered with coarse grass and relieved by shady groves of trees. The

aspect changes with the seasons, and what in the dry and hot months of February and March, when the fields are lying fallow, appears a dreary and monotonous prospect, speedily assumes under the first operations of the plough the grateful hues of tillage; which, under the influence of seasonable rains, give place in succession to the bright verdure of the tender blade, the universal green of the growing crops, and the browner tints of the ripening grain. The scene meanwhile is full of life, with husbandmen, their families and cattle, engaged in the labours of the field. These are prolonged in stacking and threshing until the hot season again sets in and the country once more assumes a parched and dusty aspect.

Every advantage has been taken in a country so favourably situated for forming tanks to construct these indispensable aids to wet cultivation. The streams which gather from the hill-sides and fertilise the valleys are, at every favourable point, embanked in such a manner as to form series or chains of reservoirs, the outflow from one at a higher level supplying the next lower, and so on all down the course of the stream at a few miles apart. These tanks, varying in size from small ponds to extensive lakes, are dispersed throughout the country to the number of 37,682; and to such an extent has this principle of storing water been followed that it would now require some ingenuity to discover a site suitable for a new one. The largest of these tanks is forty miles in circumference. Of the rivers, Mr. Rice says: 'Though useless for purposes of navigation, the main streams, especially the Kaveri and its tributaries, support an extensive system of irrigation by means of channels drawn from immense dams, called anicuts, which retain the upper waters at a high level, and permit only the overflow to pass down

stream. These works are of great antiquity, the large Talkad anicut, the lowest down on the Kaveri, having been constructed a thousand years ago ; while the most recent, with few exceptions, are not less than three centuries old.' 'The dreams which revealed to favoured mortals the plans of these ingenious works (says Wilks) have each their appropriate legend, which is related with reverence and received with implicit belief.' The channels or *kálvés* thence drawn, meander over the adjoining tracts of country on either bank, following all the sinuosities of the ground, the total length running being upwards of 1,200 miles.

The social condition of the people,—the constitution of the village corporation, the unit of the body politic and basis of administration at all times in other parts of India, as well as in Mysore,—is thus graphically described by Wilks :—' Every Indian village is, and appears always to have been, in fact, a separate community or republic ; the gauda or patel is the judge and magistrate ; the karnam or shánbhóg is the registrar, the talári or thaliwar, and the tóti, are severally the watchmen of the village and of the crops ; the nírganti distributes the water of the streams or reservoirs in just proportion to the several fields; the jotishya, joisa or astrologer performs the essential service of announcing the seasons of seedtime and harvest, and the imaginary benefit of unfolding the lucky or unlucky days and hours for all the operations of farming ; the smith and carpenter frame the rude instruments of husbandry, and the ruder dwelling of the farmer ; the potter fabricates the only utensils of the village ; the washerman keeps clean the few garments which are spun and sometimes woven in the family of the farmer or purchased at the nearest market ; the barber contributes to the cleanliness, and assists in the toilet of

the villagers; the goldsmith, marking the approach of luxury, manufactures the simple ornaments with which they delight to bedeck their wives and their daughters: and these twelve officers, styled the Bárabalúti or Ayangadi, as requisite members of the community, receive the compensation of their labour either in allotments of land from the corporate stock, or in fees consisting of fixed proportions of the crop of every farmer in the village.

'In some instances the lands of a village are cultivated in common, and the crop divided in the proportions of the labour contributed, but generally each occupant tills his own field; the waste land is a common pasture for the cattle of the village; its external boundaries are as carefully marked as those of the richest field, and they are maintained as a common right of the village, or rather the township (a term which more correctly describes the thing in our contemplation), to the exclusion of others, with as much jealousy and rancour as the frontiers of the most potent kingdoms.

'Such are the primitive component parts of all the kingdoms of India. Their technical combination to compose districts, provinces, or principalities, of from ten to a hundred thousand villages, has been infinitely diversified at different periods by the wisdom or caprice of the chief ruler, or by the vigour and resistance of those who, in every age, country, and condition, have coveted independence for themselves and the power to govern the greatest possible number of their fellow creatures. Manu's scheme of government recognises none of those persons who, in later days, were known by the several designations of wodeyars, palegars, zamindars, deshayis, &c., all in their respective jurisdictions assuming, when they dare, the title of raja or king. All the officers enumerated by Manu have, in

their several scales, at different periods, simply acted as agents of the sovereign ; as farmers of revenue contracting with the sovereign for a certain sum and levying what they can ; as partisans or chiefs of troops, receiving an assignment on revenues managed by another, or the direct management themselves, for the purpose of defraying the pay of the troops. In these several capacities they may have continued obedient to the sovereign who deputed them ; they may have obtained from his favour, or from his fears, a remission of a part of the sum to be accounted for ; they may have rebelled and usurped the whole government, or have established a small independent principality, or a larger ; but with regard to the villages or townships of which the principality is composed, they have appeared but in one character, viz., the government, the sovereign : a person exercising the sovereign authority on his own account, or by delegation on account of another. The interior constitution and condition of each separate township remains unchanged ; no revolutions affect it ; no conquest reaches it.[1]

'It is not intended to assert that the village in our contemplation may not have produced the Cæsar of his little world ; the rights of the inhabitants may have been invaded by the patel, by the palegar ruling over twenty, by the wodeyar ruling over thirty-three, by the collector over two hundred, or by the sovereign of twenty thousand townships ; each or either of these

[1] 'Every village, with its twelve Ayangadis as they are called, is a kind of little republic, with the patel at the head of it; and India is a mass of such republics. The inhabitants, during war, look chiefly to their own patel. They give themselves no trouble about the breaking up and division of kingdoms; while the village remains entire, they care not to what power it is transferred, wherever it goes the internal management remains unaltered; the patel is still the collector and magistrate and head farmer. From the age of Menu until this day, the settlements have been made either with or through the patel.'—*Report by Lieutenant-Colonel Munro.*

persons may have attempted, or have succeeded, or have failed, in persuading or forcing an augmentation of the proportion of money or of grain paid by the township to the State; but conquests, usurpations, or revolutions, considered as such, have absolutely no influence on its condition. The conqueror, or usurper, directly or through his agents, addresses himself as sovereign, or representative of the sovereign, to the head of the township; its officers, its boundaries, and the whole frame of its interior management remain unalterably the same; and it is of importance to remember that every State in India is a congerie of these little republics.'

On the whole the Mysoreans are of a better class than the dwellers on the plains of Southern India. They possess more force of character and independence of conduct. Colonel Pearse, Commissioner of Nundydroog division, who has spent many years in the province, writing in the early part of 1877, says:—'The people are very tenacious of their holdings in this part of the country; they are, moreover, very thrifty, and the better classes of the cultivators have doubtless saved money in more prosperous seasons, and are now falling back on their savings; this is evident from the fact that many of the old native rupees have lately come to the surface, not only for the purchase of merchandise, but also for the payment of the Government kists. Many of the poorer classes have been greatly benefited by the employment found for them on the coffee plantations in the province and in Coorg, the Wynaad, and on the Nilgiri hills. In more ways than the one mentioned, this European enterprise has proved very beneficial to the people. One officer says:—"But although much money is so earned (on the plantations) comparatively few pattadars (landholders under Government) are among the number, the classes who leave

their homes being chiefly day labourers, of the Holiyar, Madigar, Vakkligar, and other castes who are not landholders, and the jitgars or hinds of the pattadars. In every place where I made enquiries the same account was given of the effect of the Wynaad and Nilgiri coffee plantations on this part of the country. By the opening of these new markets better prices are obtained for grain, &c., by those who can export, and the position of the day labourer and jitgar class has been much improved. The latter stood practically in the position of slaves to the landholders under the system by which they received a heavy loan for marriage or other expenses which they could never pay off, and remained in the service of their masters on a daily pittance of grain. But many of these men who left their masters have now returned with sufficient money to pay off their debts and start as cultivators of land themselves. This is what is looked to, and as soon as a labourer or jitgar can save enough to take land, he does so, and gains a step by transformation into a cultivating ryot, the money earned on the estates being for the most part expended in so doing." '

Famine may be said to have begun in Mysore in October 1875.[1] This was the period, it will be remembered, when the Madras Government were concerned about the state of the Ceded districts which border the province of Mysore on the north-east side. The officiating chief commissioner, Mr. R. A. Dalyell, in December 1875, had to face that *bête noire* of an Indian official, remission of revenue. From district and Imperial funds works had also to be provided, and

[1] In March 1877, Colonel Pearse wrote:—'About this time last year, I visited both the Betmangala and Sira taluks, and found them both very much parched and very bare. Not one reservoir in twenty had any water in it, and the dry crops in many places were so scanty that stacks were but seldom seen in a ride of 15 or 20 miles.'

estimates amounting to 37,000 rs. were sanctioned. Mr. Dalyell was glad to observe that the matter of restoring and deepening wells was receiving attention, and approved of the measures adopted for the purpose of affording relief. The raggi and cholam crop of the previous year was unfortunately not a specially heavy one, on account of excessive rain. Everywhere was to be met with the complaint that a large portion of what the people were able to retain was destroyed by their grain-pits being flooded by water. This was the invariable answer of the ryots whenever the chief commissioner assumed in conversation with them that they had no reason to complain of the previous year's harvest. When some of the well-to-do ryots in one of the taluks were asked how the present scarcity compared with the famine of 1866–7, they replied that the troubles of that year did not affect them in a great degree, as the cotton trade and cultivation had given them plenty of money. The closure of the southern ports of America by the blockade of the Federal Government greatly stimulated the Indian cotton trade at the period named.

With a few favourable exceptions, the chief commissioner found that there was not a village throughout the Chitaldrug district, excluding perhaps the Kankuppa taluk, in which the out-turn was not bad. He says:—'I have not had the good fortune to find a single village in which some fields were not entirely unproductive. In some localities they were ploughed but not sown.'

Mr. Dalyell went on a tour in January 1876, to see for himself the condition of the country. He took the opportunity thus afforded to discuss the position of matters with the people themselves, and few, if any, complained of absolute want of grain or deficiency of water for domestic purposes, though all urged the

unusually unfavourable nature of the season as a ground for remission of the land tax, and of the grazing tax, and other local cesses. Bearing in mind the extraordinary uncertainty which has always attended all endeavours to ascertain the amount of the existing stocks of grain in any particular quarter, and the alarming rapidity with which previous deficiencies of the food-supply appeared in unexpected localities, Mr. Dalyell was satisfied that the whole of the Chitaldrug district and part of Tumkur would need very careful watching on the part of the local authorities for some time to come. He accordingly resolved to request that orders might be at once issued to all amildars in the two districts in question, to submit a full report upon the condition and prospects of their respective taluks on February 2, and thereafter on the 16th and 2nd of each month until further notice.

The reports which were furnished to the chief commissioner from time to time were of a most contradictory character. In some cases it was said the crops were good, stocks large; in others dire distress was depicted. For instance, under the latter class is the following report dated March 28: 'In August only half an inch of rain fell, and in October one and a half inches, or one-quarter of the average, the result for the whole season being a deficiency in quantity and an irregular distribution at prolonged intervals. Many villages have suffered severely from the effects of the drought. I do not consider the reports received on the cholam, raggi, and gram crops exaggerated, as it was evident that over most of the country I saw the crops had been of most miserable description. In some holdings it had not been considered worth while to put up the stake to which cattle are tied when treading out the corn,

and the grain had been beaten out with sticks. In other fields no crop at all had been got.'

On February 5, however, at the close of his tour through the most affected parts, Mr. Dalyell wrote that the threatened scarcity of food and water was not general but local. Prices were high everywhere, as also in the adjoining Madras district of Bellary. On the whole, he considered that only one taluk in Chitaldrug, and two taluks of Shimoga were in a critical position.

Later on, when the reports came in and the information collected was more mature and more general, the officiating chief commissioner wrote a minute (March 21, 1876) to the effect that alarm at first had been considerable, but that he had ascertained in his tour that the scarcity of water was confined to a few localities where the crops were exceptionally bad. The alarm had passed off mostly then ; prices were lower than in December ; in only one taluk of Tumkur (Sira), had there been a heavy loss of crop, and no distress was visible there ; and though in divers parts of the country there was scarcity and the people were pinched, no severe distress was anticipated if the early rains did not fail.

Towards the end of June it was found that the south-west monsoon rains were likely to fail, but officers still continued hopeful ; the alarm was first expressed in Chitaldrug, and soon other districts followed suit.

Writing on July 10, the commissioner of the Nagar division (Colonel Campbell) trusted there would be a plentiful rainfall during the next few weeks. 'Should that fail,' he continued, 'agricultural operations which now engross the people will be abandoned in despair, and the ryots will no longer show the apathy

which they have hitherto displayed when invited to put their hands to work, which they have been accustomed to delegate to the day labourers and coolies of their villages. This will be the sad test of real and pressing want, and the first symptoms will be carefully watched for.' He goes on to propose a scheme of small local relief works to be undertaken in case of need—such works as the construction of country roads, the filling up of pits in villages, and making streets and drains passable.

He concluded by drawing attention to a new form of danger. 'The great mortality among cattle from starvation alone,' he said, 'is a calamity from the effects of which the people will not recover for years. From what I have observed and heard, it would appear that the taluks bordering on the Malnad, and likewise those situated further east and south, have received rain sufficient to bring up the grass. In and about Shimoga, for instance, the pasture lands are in a comparatively good condition for the time of year, but in an intermediate locality so near as a strip of land on the east bank of the Tungabhadra, and north towards Harihar, hardly a blade of grass was to be seen eight days ago.'

With this letter the commissioner forwarded a report from Major Armstrong, deputy commissioner of Chitaldrug, an extract from which may be quoted as showing in a vivid and interesting way how much pressure the ordinary villager can bear before he will betake himself to Government relief. Major Armstrong says: 'The reports which I at first received, and which alarmed me considerably, were to the effect that in many instances people were living upon tamarind and date seeds, and upon a root known as "sibigadde," generally found in swampy ground and beds of old tanks, &c. To satisfy my own mind I went into most minute details

to ascertain the real facts of the case, and, as I had anticipated, I found a modicum of truth, but mixed with an enormous amount of exaggeration. I give the following illustration of what I did, and what I learnt to be the real facts of the case, in one village, and which I found to be precisely the same in every village I inspected, whether in the Hosdurga taluk or in the Davangere taluk. I selected the village of Honnah in the Jankal hobli of the Hosdurga taluk, among others, as being one of those more particularly reported to be in a very bad condition. I went there on May 31. The village contains 100 houses and about 400 inhabitants. It was reported to me that several ryots and their families were in a starving condition and living upon roots. In company with the amildar I took up a position in the centre of the village and summoned all to attend. I called up all the ryots who were reported to be in the condition described, together with their whole families, to be present; I made the men strip off their upper clothes to see if their persons at all corroborated the facts reported. I also examined numbers of their children. About ten weavers and ten ryots with their families were the persons pointed out to me. The appearance and condition of the people themselves belied the reports I received; most of them had partaken of their morning food. On my asking them to tell me what they had had to eat, they told me only "sibigadde" and some tamarind seeds, and vowed they had nothing else to eat. Turning to the amildar, who was formerly a hospital assistant, I asked him if he believed, from what he had now seen, whether it was possible that the ryots could for any length of time be sustained by such food; he said he could not believe it, and gave it as his opinion that anyone feeding upon such food for a week would certainly lose flesh, and

would sooner or later die. I then said to the people I had come there for the purpose of assisting them, but that I must insist upon knowing exactly how they lived; that what they had told me I did not believe. After some time, and seeing that I was determined about it, one of the number at last told me that it was true they were eating these roots and seeds, but that they mixed the flour with ragi grain to increase their food, and admitted they could not for any time live solely upon the roots. Being now assured I had got at the truth, I went over the village to see what work could be given, and found that a tank in the village had been estimated for; but as it was a very large work and the outlay proposed for a very large sum, I was obliged to proceed to the next village, Devapur. After ascertaining precisely similar facts as above, I proceeded to look about for suitable work, and here found a tank for which 500 rs. had just been received and sanctioned. I then called up the poor of both villages and enquired of them how many would at once proceed and begin to work; but to my astonishment the whole of them, with the exception of five men and four women, began to make all sorts of excuses; the indifference displayed was most pitiable and discouraging. In this manner I went over a very large number of villages in the Jankal and Bagur hoblis, and, at a subsequent date, over the Kondajji hobli of the Davangere taluk. In every instance the same story was repeated over and over again. On my own responsibility I opened works wherever required then and there.

'The above is a real sample of facts, and it must be admitted that great distress prevails, but not in the exaggerated form that has been reported.

'If the rain falls speedily, I believe we may tide over our own difficulties; but if the rains keep off for

another ten days or a fortnight, I fear the standing crops must inevitably wither. In some parts it has been reported that the seed sown has failed to germinate at all. The present outlook is, I have no hesitation in saying, exceedingly gloomy, and a few days must, I feel assured, decide the question as to whether there will or will not be a famine.'

To meet the additional expense involved in meeting the distress described, the Government of India granted a lakh of rupees out of the savings of the State (46,20,000 rs) In allotments of 10,000 rs. and under, this amount was soon expended.

Towards the end of August, commissioners of divisions sent in urgent reports regarding the bad prospects caused by the partial failure of the monsoon. The first application for special relief works to meet the scarcity was received from the deputy commissioner of Kolar (Mr. Krishnaiengar), who asked on August 21 for a grant of 6,000 rs. for works in the taluk of Gamnakanpalyan : this was given at once. The deputy commissioner of Tumkur (Capt. Ludlow) on August 29 reported that the wells were running dry, and it was questionable whether the water generally would suffice to enable the crops to reach maturity. Mortality amongst cattle was already very high, and many beasts were to be seen in most villages lying about, hardly able to move. The people exhibited unmistakable evidences of great want, particularly among the very lowest orders. 'In many of the villages I visited yesterday,' he says, 'the women and children turned out *en masse* calling for food, and there were not wanting signs to show that many of them were really suffering from hunger. Roots and leaves of different shrubs, among others the tangadi shrub, are commonly used as food, and if raggi is partaken of once in three days by

the lower orders, they probably consider themselves fortunate.' The deputy commissioner continues (showing how little the offer of employment on earthworks on ordinary piecework terms affects and attracts the classes who are unaccustomed to such work, and usually live by agriculture): 'One case of starvation in which the family had locked themselves up in their house was reported to the amildar on the evening of August 26; I proceeded to the village the following morning and enquired into the case. The family were certainly in want, but none of the members appeared to be in any danger of death from starvation. Besides which, as I pointed out to the villagers, there was a large work, namely, the Sira-Amrapur road, going on close to the village, and they could have got employment there if they wished, particularly as the contractor was in want of labour. It appears, however, that the villagers say that they haven't strength to dig. This I cannot credit. Anyhow the contractor assured me that he imported Waddar labour from her Majesty's territory. I pointed out clearly to the ryots that they could not expect Government to feed them while they sat idle in their houses, but if they wished, employment would be found for them. In some villages—particularly at Hossur, where there is much suffering—they expressed themselves willing to come to any work but well labour. The late officiating chief commissioner was pleased to sanction 10,000 rs. on relief works, to be utilised in sinking wells, &c. I give particulars as to how this money has been expended; and, in submitting the matter, beg to state that sinking kapile wells (*i.e.* wells worked with bullock and a basket), so far as affording work to the agricultural classes, has not answered to the extent that was reasonably anticipated. The ryots

will not work at them, owing to the danger attending their excavation, and hence such works bring little labour to the ryot's door. I had a practical exemplification yesterday of the danger surrounding the construction of these works, and this too in a small ordinary kapile well. The result ended in the death of one man. As pointed out by Colonel Pearse, these wells are a permanent benefit to the country, but the classes who now need relief will not work at them.'

One of the earliest indications of the reality of the pressure from which the people were said to be suffering was afforded by the sale of family ornaments and jewels. When Indian people part with their ornaments, there can be no question as to the reality of their distress, 'ornaments being a sort of reserve fund to be sold in difficulty.'[1] The markets were stocked with these greatly treasured articles. Shroffs and goldsmiths attended the fairs regularly to buy up the ornaments. The jewellery worn by the higher and lower classes, and generally presented by the husband at the time of marriage, may be thus described: The wife of a poor ryot has a silver kadagu or bracelet, valued at 5 rs. or 6 rs., a silver minchu or anklet valued at 3 rs. or 4 rs., and a gold gundu or necklace valued at from 15 rs. to 30 rs.; the ornaments usually possessed by the females of the superior classes consist of one vali, or earring, worth 25 rs. to 100 rs., and one bugadi, another kind of ear ornament, set with pearls, priced 30 rs. to 70 rs. The women in both higher and lower classes set great value on these ornaments and will only part with them under the most pressing and unfavourable circumstances. In some of the small markets the sales began with the disposal of articles valued at 1,000 rs., and as distress intensified, the number and value greatly increased. In

[1] 'Depreciation of Silver,' by Walter Bagehot, page 4. Longmans.

addition to ornaments and jewels, a number of old coins of various kinds are said to have been produced for sale, and it must not be forgotten that in all probability the value of articles sold privately exceeded that of those brought to the markets, as many persons were deterred by feelings of shame from carrying on transactions in public.[1]

[1] The writer of the report whence the facts mentioned have been gleaned, remarks: 'In connection with this, a published statement of the quantity of silver sold to the Bombay Mint is worth perusal, showing as it does the increasing extent of these sales in that Presidency since November and December. While it is sad to think that so many families have been compelled to part with property to which they are attached, it is on the other hand a matter for congratulation that they have been able in better times to accumulate silver which has stood them in good stead in a time of great need.'

CHAPTER II.

OCTOBER 1876 TO AUGUST 1877.

THE south-west monsoon in 1876 began well in Mysore, and then failed. The north-east monsoon was practically a failure. It was not till it seemed certain that the future of the province could not be relieved by even a late rainfall, that the chief commissioner definitely announced that a famine had to be faced. This was in October. On the 3rd of that month a statement was drawn up, showing the successively bad seasons which the country had had to endure, the increased prices of food stuffs, and the prospects of crops. The latter, the most important item of all, was thus described: 'Of the three districts composing the Nundydroog division, Kolar and Tumkur are chiefly affected. In these tracts the dry crops, which, owing to the delay in the monsoon rains, had been recently put down, have been more or less wholly lost by the absence of timely showers during August and September. There has been an absolute failure of pasture, and cattle, which are so indispensable to the ryot, have died literally in thousands.' A request for further funds followed, and it was pointed out that the lakh already given from savings, with the exception of 3,000 rs. for feeding kitchens, and 1,06,983 rs. from local funds, had been expended wholly on relief works, such as the repair of tanks and the deepening of wells. This was a good beginning, and if the same principle had been borne in mind throughout,

better would it have been for the reputation of Mysore administrators and for the welfare of the people. Several communications by telegram passed between the President in Council and the chief commissioner, in which the former asked for early separate statements regarding each taluk in districts where drought or scarcity prevailed, showing area of taluk, population, realisable revenue in 1875-6, rough proportion of kharif to rabi cultivation, average annual rainfall, actual rainfall this season, ordinary price of staple food of the taluk at this season, actual present price of the same, probable extent of failure of crops, and amount, if any, sanctioned for relief works and other relief.

On November 1 Mr. Saunders gave up the last ray of hope and set to work to meet the difficulty, the modes of operation being altogether different from those in working order at that time in Bombay and those being prepared in Madras. Sir Henry Norman, the President in Council, was informed by telegram that the statements asked for should be prepared and submitted. He added:—'The failure of the north-east monsoon has completed the destruction to the extent of twenty per cent. of the kharif crops in all districts. Great distress exists throughout from loss of harvest in two successive years. Relief works already in operation, and will be needed on a large scale in every district. Large imports of grain by rail. I have sanctioned purchase of grain in local markets for payments on relief works. Public meeting takes place to-morrow morning, when I propose, unless prohibited, to intimate the intention of local administration to supplement all local private subscriptions for relieving distress by an equivalent grant, as was done in the famine of 1866 by Mr. Browning.' The next day the answer came. 'Government approves proposed intimation at public meeting that local ad-

ministration will supplement all local private subscriptions for relieving distress by an equivalent grant, as was done in 1866.'

The meeting was held, subscriptions were raised, and a large central committee was formed in Bangalore to cope with the existing distress. To this body was entrusted the organisation of other committees whose operations would extend to the outlying districts. Thenceforward, for ten months, the relief committees and non-official agency formed an integral part of Mysore relief efforts. Too much dependence was placed upon means which, at the utmost, should be considered simply as auxiliaries supplementing Government labours and rendering aid where the authorities were unable to afford assistance. This was a radical defect in administration. The mistake was (1) that nothing was done to dovetail this food relief into the form of relief by works; (2) that after private subscriptions had ceased, the committees remained to arrange expenditure of Government money. Instead of one man having control over everything, each within certain limits did what was right in his own eyes, and the consequence was the distress was not properly or fairly met. The members of the various committees worked exceedingly well, and with their chief, Mr. J. D. Gordon, C.S.I., deserved the eulogium passed upon them by the Viceroy in September 1877. What was wanted was a clear and coherent policy of works and gratuitous relief, in which the efforts of non-official gentlemen could be made available in helping forward the general scheme.

The public had been earlier than the Government in recognising the need for relief and in giving it. The chief commissioner made his appeal in November. It should be stated, however, that the chief commissioner had assisted kitchens before this. In September Kolar

and Tumkur started several kitchens by private subscription, and 3,000 rs. were given to Kolar as a Government contribution; and on October 27 the chief commissioner sanctioned 1,000 rs. per month to each district —Kolar, Bangalore, and Tumkur, to supplement private charity. In September two private associations were formed in Bangalore by some of the leading members of the native community in the town and cantonment for the relief of the distress which already appeared. Funds were raised by means of monthly subscriptions and donations for the purpose of affording gratuitous relief to persons unable to work, in the shape of cooked food at kitchens established in both places. In addition to this, in the cantonment ten native gentlemen subscribed a capital of 5,500 rs. for the purchase of grain, to be sold slightly below the market rates to the more indigent, and undertook themselves to bear the loss. The donors were:—

	Rs.
Rai Bahadur Govindoo Chetty	1,000
Mr. A. R. Sabapatti Moodeliar	500
„ T. K. A. Tambu Chettiar	500
„ A. Narayanasami Moodeliar	500
„ M. Muttusami Chetty	500
„ Kota Mahomed Hassain	500
„ Maruf Sahab	500
„ B. Ramalingam	500
„ Abdul Kudur Sahab	500
„ S. Hamajii Rao	500

In a large number of places in the interior feeding kitchens were opened for people in great need. Some of these were inspected early in December by the commissioner of the Ashtragam division, who drew up a scheme for the establishment of such institutions at the most important centres in his division, and especially at those places which commanded the roads along which emaciated emigrants were then streaming with their cattle to find pasture in the Malnad, or to get employ-

ment in the coffee gardens. Colonel Hay (the Commissioner) remarked that on the whole the recipients appeared to have at the time no other means of obtaining food, and many of them, without what they were then getting, would probably have starved. It was noticed that there was a tendency for professional beggars to congregate at the kitchens, which, however, was only natural, seeing that those who in ordinary times afforded them assistance had now to be relieved themselves.

Voluntary contributions in widespread distress were, however, but poor means with which to meet existing want. The deputy commissioner of the Hassan district, writing in November, said:—'The subscriptions made by the people in each taluk have not generally been paid up, and it is probable that only a part will be recovered, as they are only voluntary, and some of the people are already holding back; thus it may be safely said that the present contributions cannot be depended upon to last more than a fortnight or a month, and that Government will have to step in from the 1st of next month to prevent cases of death by starvation occurring.' Again, 'My instructions to the amildars were that they should induce some of the respectable subscribers to undertake the distribution of the food; but there are few public-spirited men enough who will devote their time to such public purposes, and practically the work has fallen on the amildars. It is evident to me that, whether relief committees are established or not, it will devolve on the amildars to make the necessary arrangements for starting and maintaining kitchens.'

It would be wearisome to the reader to follow in detail the mode of administration and the features of distress which exhibited themselves. An adequate idea of the situation may be gathered from a description of events at three periods—October—December, 1876; March—April, 1877; July—August, 1877.

OCTOBER–DECEMBER, 1876.

As soon as the crop failure was recognised prices went up with a bound, and the administration, so early as November 1876, took a step which was not initiated in the adjoining Presidency for some time after. The chief commissioner found it necessary to grant an allowance of 1 r. per mensem to every salaried official on the permanent establishment who was in receipt of 15 rs. and under, and with respect to the local troops (a corps of cavalry and some infantry) a compensation which was fixed at 1 seer of ragi and 3 seers of horse-grain per diem, when such articles were selling above a fixed rate, was granted to all below the rank of commissioned officers. In both cases the concession was limited so as not to extend beyond December 31 following; but the chief commissioner had no expectations that the price of food would fall sufficiently to admit of its being withdrawn for some months to come.

Various proposals were laid before Mr. Saunders by the commissioners of divisions, those by Colonel Pearse being particularly wise and sensible. They were as follows:—

'I. Permission to be given to sow cholam in the beds of all dry tanks and to allow ryots to sink wells for irrigating the crop. The Government share to be one-fourth, and to be at the disposal of the district officer for distribution to the poor.

'II. Wells to be sunk in the beds of all dry tanks, in the hope of obtaining thereby a supply of water for domestic purposes. These may be relief works.

'III. The Irrigation Department to be directed to proceed with projects on as large a scale as their means will admit in all taluks where they are now working.

'IV. Railway embankments to be started on the line

to Mysore, and at such points as may be decided on without fear of taking up a bad line, between this and the border of the Shimoga district *viâ* Tiptur, as the crops have utterly failed along nearly the whole of that line of country.

'V. Permission to be given me to allot to certain taluks sums of 5,000, 3,000, 2,000, and 1,500 rs. respectively per mensem, to be expended on relief works, until such time as matters improve.

'VI. To permit me, *if the necessity should arise*, to purchase grain through the merchants at Madras or elsewhere, and contract for its being laid down at certain central points where large relief works are going on, for the purpose of paying in kind the poor who are employed thereon.

'VII. If matters do not improve, the munsif's court to be closed in the outlying localities and the establishment to be placed under the deputy commissioners for the purpose of supervising relief works, each of these establishments being under the general supervision of their own munsif's.

'VIII. A liberal allowance to be granted monthly towards the maintenance of public kitchens at each taluk head-quarters, for the purpose of feeding the very old, the very young, and in fact those among the poorer classes who are unable to work. Half of all chattram and other feeding allowances in each taluk where feeding chattram, &c., exist, to be transferred to the public kitchens.'

Similar suggestions were made by the other commissioners. In addition it was specially proposed that the police force in the taluks should be increased.

Colonel Pearse's proposals came before the chief commissioner, who passed orders upon them as follows: I. Approved; II. Approved; III. Referred to the De-

partment of Public Works; IV. Considered doubtful, but should receive further consideration by the Department of Public Works; V. Amount asked for (43,500 rs. per mensem) excessive; VI. Tenders for grain to be delivered in certain taluks might be advertised for, but Mr. Saunders was desirous that no measure should at that crisis be adopted which would in any way militate against the principles of free trade;[1] VII. Approved; VIII. Not sanctioned at present; IX. Approved. Instead of increasing the police force, the Mysore Silladar Horse were ordered to a few well-selected points in each district, where their presence would serve to allay alarm, and, if necessary, repress disorders.

Large works were further pressed upon the chief commissioner, but were not undertaken. Arrangements were made for easing the collection of land revenue; deputy commissioners of districts were authorised to grant the remission of one-half the assessment on all wet lands under tanks which had received no supply of water in 1876, and under wells or streams where the land had not been cultivated for two years through want of water; also to remit on dry lands six annas, or six-sixteenths of the revenue, to ryots paying 35 rs. and

[1] Justification for confidence in free trade was subsequently shown. One instance may be quoted. The commissioner of the Nagar division wrote:—'As an example of the manner in which supply follows demand, I may mention the case of the rice grown in the Malnad taluks of the Shimoga district. It had been the immemorial practice of the Malnad ryots to take their surplus stock to the western coast, and to bring thence such goods as they required for household purposes, and at first some merchants whom I consulted scouted the idea of endeavouring to change the course of trade by bringing the rice eastwards, unless Government interfered by bringing it up on the spot and carting it to certain central depôts. But as time wore on and prices rose, it was ascertained that traders, not waiting for the new crops, had penetrated into the Malnad and were purchasing from house to house the surplus stores of previous years. It thus became plain that no aid from Government would be required, and as a matter of fact the Malnad ryots have sold at their very doors to traders from the east all the rice not required for their own consumption at extraordinarily high prices.'

under, four annas to ryots paying over 35 rs., and to remit all interest on arrears of revenue.

The condition of the agricultural and poorer labouring classes was soon very bad. The ryots were necessarily great sufferers, and except in the case of wealthy landholders, who had capital or large stores of grain to fall back upon, the ordinary agriculturist was in a few weeks reduced to the verge of pauperism, as in very many instances he had not only exhausted all his grain, but the heavy loss of cattle had deprived him of the means of raising money. Many of the ryots had left for the coffee districts, and in 14 villages of one taluk in the Tumkur district in November, there was not a person remaining. The poorer labouring classes were worse off than the ryot, there being no demand for their labour; hence they were unable to earn sufficient for their daily food, and among them there was undoubtedly great want, which in many cases bordered on actual starvation.

The stocks of grain were comparatively large, but they were in the hands of a few men who, in the *quasi*-feudal system prevailing in Mysore, side by side with the village republic, supported large numbers of labourers. Some of these men showed themselves praiseworthily sturdy in their independence of Government assistance. When aid was offered them they refused to accept it, saying it was a point of honour with them to support their own people; and they did so even when whole villages had to be maintained for many months. Thus, though there was a good deal of grain in stock, very little found its way into the markets, and Mysore was greatly dependent from the first upon the food which could be brought by the railway.[1]

[1] Colonel Pearse gives the following graphic description of the state of affairs in the Nundidroog division:—'In August the rainfall was still scanty

Want of pasture had told severely upon the cattle. So far back as September, when fodder was comparatively plentiful, 11,400 were reported as having died for want of provender. In November the 'khedda,' or elephant-catching operations were stopped in order to set the superintendent, Mr. Sanderson, free to look after the cattle, and direct them to the best places for pasture in the forests and elsewhere.

On November 10 the chief commissioner deemed it necessary to impress upon deputy commissioners the inexpediency of multiplying relief works; for though

but in September hope somewhat revived; tolerably heavy rain fell in all the central and southern taluks and many of the border taluks got a moderate supply, and as we had every reason to hope for the N.W. monsoon in October and November, horse gram (kulthi) and other late crops were extensively sown, and hopes were still entertained that a half or even quarter crop would be ultimately harvested; but as time wore on, the aspect of matters began to give rise to grave anxiety, and the last shower of rain fell in Bangalore on October 6, and this may be accepted as the date from which drought and famine really commenced; the state of the crops everywhere became more and more serious before the month of October expired, and dating from the first week in October, nearly six months have now passed by without more than an occasional shower over the greater portion of the 8,000 square miles included in this division. Heavy dews in many places kept the crops alive for some time, and wherever a few showers fell during October and November the kulthi, ballar or bean crop, as also the togari, still showed signs of vitality, but the outlying fringe of taluks previously referred to gradually became worse and worse in condition. In the month of November I went round nearly 300 miles of the division, and visited almost every taluk to the westward, and satisfied myself that the state of affairs answered to the description given. I found the Tumkur taluk and portions of Kunigal and Gubbi with some crops to be harvested, but beyond a line drawn through Kunigal and Gubbi, towns to about 8 or 10 miles north of Tumkur, there was literally nothing growing; here and there a patch of well cultivation was to be seen, but scarcely a field with a bit of stubble on it was to be found in one semicircle of about 90 miles. Whatever crop had existed had been pulled up by the roots and given to the cattle as fodder, but there was evidently grain and money still in the country in the hands of the better classes of the cultivators, for many of the wealthy patels or headmen were feeding the poor extensively out of their own private stores, and though great numbers of the less valuable cattle had died or been driven away to Malnad or Ghat country, the superior ryots were still in possession of some good cattle, and numbers of them were even then paying 6 rs. per bandy-load for ragi straw, which they came in large parties to purchase in the Bangalore district or wherever it could be procured.'

such works should be sufficiently numerous to afford employment to all able-bodied persons within a reasonable distance, efficient supervision could not be exercised if, as in Sira, relief works had to be carried on in forty-five different places. The course thus followed must inevitably lead to great waste in the absence of the needful supervision of superior officers. The number of relief works should not, it was remarked, as a rule, exceed two or three in each taluk, and the deputy commissioner should provide work in such places sufficient to employ all able-bodied persons, who, if in real want of work, will not hesitate to seek for it five, or eight, or even ten miles from their villages. Here the fundamental principles of true relief administration were recognised and stated, which makes the subsequent neglect of them the more deplorable.

A passing phase of the great dispute which occurred between the Government of India and the Governments of Madras and Bombay was exhibited in Mysore in a letter from Mr. Hope, dated November 27, wherein the chief commissioner was informed that the President in Council considered it undesirable to concentrate large bodies of labourers on relief works at a distance from their homes, and would much prefer that minor works should as far as practicable be carried on at numerous places throughout the distressed localities. As has been well said, 'The Government of India was then in its unregenerate mood.' The Governments of Bombay and Madras had some time before, it was stated, received instructions to this effect. In the same communication the chief commissioner was directed to prepare fortnightly a narrative showing concisely the conditions of each district and the measures of relief in progress.

Much wandering took place in the Hassan district

of Ashtragâm division. It was believed that half at least of the population had migrated, and a large number of refugees from Tumkur, some in a starving condition, were by the end of November travelling through adjoining districts.

Taking a survey of the position of affairs at the end of 1876, crops would appear to have failed everywhere, and suffering to be intense in all parts of the province. A movement among the people was discernible nearly everywhere. Almost alone among official reports of the period, those in Mysore make frequent reference to starvation. If the same reticence characterises officers in the province as was noticeable in the adjoining Presidencies, the existence of very pressing distress must be inferred. It does not appear from the records of the administration that adequate means, either in works or gratuitous relief, were undertaken. The Department of Public Works seems to have been particularly remiss, no well-considered scheme of large works—or small ones even, for that matter—being laid before the chief commissioner by Colonel Johnson, R.E., the officiating head of the department. Non-official effort was very active. Similar official activity, with a full knowledge of the requirements of the province, would have saved hundreds of thousands of lives which eventually succumbed.

FEBRUARY—APRIL, 1877.

The chief event of the period now under review was the visit in February, and again in April, of Sir Richard Temple. The Delegate formed a high opinion of what he saw in the way of administration. The gist of his report in February was: 'I think there can be no doubt that the relief operations in Mysore have been much more economically conducted than in the neighbouring

districts of Madras. The carefulness exercised in this respect is very creditable to the local authorities in Mysore.' No doubt, Sir Richard Temple, arriving in Mysore with the impression that money had been lavishly expended in Madras, was struck by the strictly economical way in which grants were doled out by the Mysore Government, but it is to be feared that he failed to realise the danger of falling into the opposite extreme ; especially did he fail to note the numerical weakness of the administration and the necessity of strengthening it by importing extra officers to assist in carrying out the abnormal and heavy duties which had to be performed. Consequently, in thus failing to realise the situation the visit of the Delegate was worse than useless, for it confirmed the chief commissioner in continuing to depend upon the inadequate means he was adopting to meet the crisis. So far from taking a desponding view of the situation in February 1877, Sir Richard Temple was very hopeful, as will be seen from the digest of his minute and his secretary's memoranda.

Mr. Bernard, secretary to Sir Richard Temple, wrote regarding the conditions and prospects of the Mysore province from Bellary on February 13. By the courtesy of Mr. Saunders, the chief commissioner, Sir Richard Temple met at Bangalore all the officers of the Civil and Public Works Departments at the head-quarters of the Mysore administration ; he met a deputation of the chief traders of Bangalore; and he travelled through the Bangalore and Kolar districts in company with the commissioner, Colonel Pearce, and with the deputy-commissioners, Mr. Ricketts and Mr. B. Krishnaiengar, C.S.I.

An estimate of the crop failure and other details was tabulated as follows:—

Name of district	Area in square miles	Population	Proportion of crops saved[1]	Number on relief works in beginning of January
Bangalore . . .	2,914	828,000	2 annas	12,983
Kolar	2,577	618,000	3 „	8,500
Tumkur . . .	3,606	632,000	2 „	8,900
Mysore. . . .	4,127	943,000	8 to 11 „	5,560
Hassan. . . .	3,291	669,000	8 „	9,746
Shimoga . . .	3,797	499,000	9 „	1,236
Kadur	2,294	334,000	4 „	6,296
Chittaldroog. . .	4,471	531,000	2 „	6,000
Total . .	27,077	5,054,000		59,221

Name of district	Number on charitable relief in beginning of January	Percentage of the total population who are thus receiving relief
Bangalore	11,527	3 per cent.
Kolar	3,763	2 „
Tumkur	2,100	1¼ „
Mysore	3,699	1 „
Hassan	4,249	2 „
Shimoga	1,546	½ „
Kadur.	1,430	2 „
Chittaldroog	1,780	1½ „
Total . . .	30,094	1¾ per cent.

'In the Hassan and Shimoga districts, which lie close to the Western Ghats, there was some rainfall, and there was a moderate harvest. In the Mysore district the rainfall to the south and the Cauvery irrigation to the north brought up the average yield of the district. But over the rest of the province there has been grievous failure of rain; nearly all the rain-fed tanks in the northern districts are dry; and the "dry" crop has for the most part failed.'

Private trade began to be active in the autumn, and large stocks of grain arrived by railway. 'The grain dealers say that this importation will continue till June (or July), so long as there is grain at Madras or any-

[1] Sixteen annas represents a full crop.

where else to come. It seems that the Bangalore dealers despatch daily some hundreds of cart-loads of grain into the districts of the interior. This grain goes into the Bangalore, Tumkur, and Chittaldroog districts. Parts of the Bellary[1] and Kolar districts also draw their supplies from Bangalore. The Mysore district lives at present on its home produce, while the districts of Hassan, Shimoga, and Kudoor are subsisting on their own produce, eked out by food imported from the western coast. These three districts last mentioned have large highland tracts abutting on the Western Ghats, wherein the rainfall has been good.

'The traders say that the local stocks will not come out into the market until the tanks fill in June or July next, and the next crop is thereby assured. Until that time the demand for imported grain will continue. Indeed, in the month of May, when the ports on the west coast are practically closed, new demands on the Bangalore source of supply may arise from districts which are now fed from the west. There are excellent bridged roads all over the country, and there is abundance of carts and draught cattle, so that supplies can be carried to whatever tracts require and can pay for them.

'So far as the facts can be ascertained, tracts containing two and three-quarter millions of people are now drawing grain from the railway between Bangalore and the eastern border of Mysore; probably nearly two-thirds of this population may be consuming old stocks, and thus perhaps 900,000 people may require imported grain. An import of 13,000 tons a month would support this population, and the railway is already doing

[1] When Sir Richard Temple visited Pennekonda, the southern division of Bellary, he found that its three taluks (250,000 population) drew the whole of their supplies from Bangalore. But a part of the Chittaldroog district was supplied from Bellary.

more than this. But this calculation would show that Mysore will continue to draw grain largely from Madras by railway, up to an average of about 430 tons daily; so that the Mysore demand upon the powers of the railway is and will remain even larger than was supposed at the time when the proposal for doubling the Madras railway to Arconum was considered, and was recommended by Sir Richard Temple.

'The Madras Government desired Sir Richard Temple to ascertain whether Bangalore could not draw some of its supplies from the port of Negapatam *viâ* the Southern Railway; and they stated that freights from Calcutta to Negapatam were the same as to Madras, while the grain rates on the Southern Railway had been purposely lowered, so as to make it as cheap for Bangalore dealers to import by Negapatam as by Madras. The dealers, when questioned, replied that they had not heard of the reduction of the railway freight rates by Negapatam, that they had correspondents at Madras, but not at the southern ports, and that there was no great imported store at Negapatam for them to draw upon as there was at Madras. They admitted, however, that if it were demonstrably cheaper, and as speedy, to get grain *viâ* Negapatam, that route would no doubt be taken.'

The memorandum on Kolared showed that in this district a large number of relief works were ready, and that many of these works were actually open. In the Bangalore district, as also in Tumkur and Chittaldroog districts, relief works were open; and the chief commissioner had issued orders that relief works should not be stopped in tracts where they were really needed by reason of the temporary failure of money allotments. 'All the work is done at ordinary piece-work rates, and the officers of the engineering department co-operate

most fully with the civil officers in carrying out relief works. The relief works in progress are mainly tanks, on which so much work has to be done all over the country before the many chains of irrigation tanks are all brought up to the required standard of completeness. All the work, therefore, that is being done is undoubtedly good and useful work.

'Sir Richard Temple inspected the gangs on two great works near Bangalore, namely, the waterworks tank and the Dharmboody tank. One, if not both, of these works would be undertaken and pressed forward in ordinary years. Among the thousands of labourers on these two works, Sir Richard Temple did not detect any persons who seemed to be in a reduced physical condition, though he saw considerable numbers of men and women who appeared well able to take care of themselves without State aid. Sir Richard Temple also inspected several gangs on large and small works in the interior of the Bangalore and Kolar districts. On a tank near Doodha Ballapore, in the Bangalore district, he observed several men who were in a very reduced physical condition, and found a very few cases of the same kind in a gang at Begapilly in the Kolar district. In most of these cases it turned out that the labourer was the only breadwinner for a family of six or eight persons, and so he was unable to earn enough to keep his relations alive, and also to maintain himself in a fit condition for hard labour. Such cases seem to show that the village relief organisation should be worked up so as to find out and relieve very destitute families of this kind. Unless such village relief be promptly set to work, there is risk that individuals belonging to such families may perish.[1]

[1] Action was promptly taken on this suggestion, as the two following paragraphs from an order of the chief commissioner will show:—'The

'No single large relief work, on which several thousands could be employed, has yet been sanctioned in Mysore. So long as good useful work on irrigation tanks is being done at piece-work rates, perhaps it may not be necessary to begin any large work. But if hereafter very large bodies of people should require relief employment, the Mysore Government has ready two excellent schemes, if its means allow of its embarking upon either of them. These schemes are, firstly, the railway from Bangalore to Mysore (84 miles), which has been surveyed, aligned, and for which the project is in every respect ready. The line, however, does not pass through the worst famine tracts; but the railway would be a very great boon to the province. The second scheme, which has also been thoroughly prepared, is the Mari Kanwe reservoir in the Chittaldroog

chief commissioner desires that in every taluk where severe distress exists, and in every village within such taluk, a careful house-to-house inspection be instituted by the patels of the village for the purpose of seeking out any individuals whose condition is that described in paragraph 2 above. Where such may be found, it will be the duty of the patel to afford such relief as circumstances may dictate, either by sending such as are at all capable of work to the nearest work in progress, or, in the case of those who are powerless to labour, by having them conveyed, after their immediate necessities have been provided for, to the taluk head-quarters, or to other subsidiary relief kitchens which it may be necessary to institute. When the individual may be in an unfit state for removal, the village patels will be charged with the duty of supplying food gratuitously, for one or more days, as may appear to be absolutely requisite, and the expense thus incurred will be reimbursed to them by the amildars from the funds placed at their disposal by Government.

'The patels must be held primarily responsible that no one individual residing in their village, or traveller passing through its limits, is allowed to succumb to actual starvation, or is removed whilst in a state of such debility as to render him likely to die from sheer exhaustion.'

But it needs very little acquaintance with human nature to see that an order of this kind could not be carried out unless special officers were appointed to inspect villages, and funds given to them and to the patels to support the famine-stricken. As a matter of fact, for want of these precautions, and of the machinery needed for learning what was being done, and for insisting on the orders being carried out, they remained nearly a dead letter.

district, which would cost 15 lakhs of rupees and irrigate 50,000 acres. If, therefore, large works are required, the Mysore Government has them ready for immediate commencement.

'Outdoor relief in the shape of cooked food (ragi pudding and a little curried vegetable) is being given to about 30,000 persons throughout the province. Sir Richard Temple visited some of these relief houses in Bangalore, and another at Bagapally in Kolar. For the most part the paupers seem to be quite fit recipients of charitable relief. At the Bangalore relief house were some few cases, principally travellers, in which hunger must have caused severe suffering. When the system of rural and village relief is in working order, such cases will probably not occur. Sir Richard Temple suggested that at large centres like Bangalore, Doodha, Ballapore, Kolar, and at the taluk head-quarters, in-door relief should be given at relief camps on the Madras system. The many chuttrums (serais) on the roads would probably serve the purpose without building special sheds. Hereafter, when distress becomes keener, it may be necessary to have a relief house in every hooblee (subdivision of a taluk) throughout the worst parts of the severely affected districts.'

Mr. Bernard wrote an interesting memorandum respecting the Kolar district of Mysore, from which some portions may be quoted:—

'When Sir Richard Temple was at Mudanapalli, a subdivision of Cuddapah, on February 1 and 2, he learnt that one of the roads thence to Bangalore lay through Kolar. As this is considered one of the most distressed districts of Mysore, save only Tumkur and Chittaldroog, he desired that its condition and the character of relief there should be ascertained on the spot. At the same time Sir Richard Temple had

engaged to meet certain English officers and native gentlemen of North Arcot on the road to Gudiatum, which passes through British territory only. He therefore sent me, his secretary, by Streenarasapuram. At Kolar, Mr. B. Krishnaiengar, C.S.I., who has been deputy commissioner of Kolar for twelve years, showed me over the nearer relief works, and gave me every information in his power. He introduced me also to the amildar and the medical officer of Kolar. . . .

'The grain markets at Kolar and at the chief towns are well supplied. But all the grain now exposed for sale is foreign grain, imported by railway. What stocks the richer ryots may expose are now held, and will be held, till rain comes. So far as we could, we tested this by visiting some of the grain shops, and questioning the chief traders of three different castes in the town. They showed us their different kinds of grain, and said it all came by railway—the rice and pulse from Madras, and the ragi from Salem and Coimbatore. They declared that the ryots would not sell their stocks, but they were quite confident that the trade would supply all demands both of Kolar town and of outlying marts. There were plenty of carts to do the business. But they said there was fear lest the railway could not supply them quickly enough, as there was delay about getting off consignments from Madras. I told them that the doubling of the line to Arconum would mend matters in this respect.

'Mr. B. Krishna had previously given information identical with the account given by the traders whom we questioned at their shops. He explained that each large town (cusbah) procured its own supplies from the railway, and that village dealers carried grain from the cusbahs to the weekly markets in the interior. He had, as yet, not heard that the supply had anywhere

fallen short. He believed and had all along thought that private traders would supply the country so far as the railway could enable them to do so. At one time there was a talk of organising the country carriage for traders, but they said such interference would only make carts more expensive, and so the proposal dropped. The price of grain at the present time is':—

Common rice .	.	.	.	.	.	8	seers per rupee	
Ragi, home-grown .	.	.	.	.	.	8½	„	„ „
Ragi, foreign .	.	.	.	.	.	10	„	„ „

The Kolar ragi is a "dry" crop, whereas Madras ragi is mostly grown on irrigated lands. The dry ragi is a harder and more valuable grain than the irrigated (or "nath") species, and is easily distinguishable therefrom. Prices in the beginning of December ruled at 6 and 6½ seers. The comparative cheapness is due to large importations from Madras, where grain is now growing much cheaper.

'On a certain work in Kolar town the deputy commissioner was obliged, by the circumstances of the work, to pay daily labour, and then he reduced the daily wages to 1⅓ anna a day. There was some complaint at first that the rate was cruelly low. But he adhered to his decision. The people worked on, and when a part of it was done and he was able to measure it up roughly, he found that it had been cheaply done. The relief labourers whom I saw to-day on this particular work appeared to be sufficiently well nourished. But I did not see very many of them, as to-day is a festival.

'Something had been said at Mudanapalli about the undesirability of tank work for the employment of relief labour, and it had been said that the tanks were managed by the engineer department, and that they could not be touched without engineering guidance. The deputy commissioner of Kolar, Mr. B. Krishnaiengar, from

the first preferred tank work to any other relief work. He said that all over the country there were tanks which wanted repair or which had been breached in former years ; he urged that their repairs could be done by task work and without engineering supervision. If he heightened the bund (bank) he widened and occasionally heightened the escape-weir (calingula), and in some cases he put in an extra irrigating sluice, to carry water off to higher lands from the heightened level of the tank. He urged that by deepening a tank he held more water in it, and so made the supply for the old "achkat" (irrigable area) more secure. Wherever he deepened a tank he strengthened the bank (bund), and in some cases he took off and relaid the boulders which revet the sloped water-face of the bund (bank). If he had water left in the tank, then he used it to puddle the face of the bank ; but if not, he was obliged to forego puddling, as it cost[1] him so much to carry the water to the bank.

'I visited a large tank which had been breached many years ago, and had since been unused. This tank, distant three or four miles from Kolar, was the first big work undertaken near Kolar. Save in Kolar town no other relief work was opened within six miles. 3,000 rs. have already been spent upon and 1,500 rs. more will have to be spent. It will irrigate about 250 acres of now uncultivated land. The bank is of earth, part of the front is puddled, and it is revetted with carefully packed boulders on a slope of one in one and a half. A new high-level irrigating sluice has been put in, and the old low-level sluice is being repaired. The waste weir (calingula) is being widened, as the tank bank is some-

[1] 'I observe that in his relief works Mr. Krishnaiengar foregoes puddling and tamping and consolidating metal, as such work would greatly add to the cost of his relief. He looks forward to doing this in the rainy weather from ordinary funds, when water will be everywhere available.'

what higher than before. I could see all the places whence the earth, paid for by measurement, was taken out. Out of the 800 labourers usually on the tank, only about 50 were at work to-day, because it was a festival. And the deputy commissioner explained that the work-people were not obliged to come, but if they did no work, of course they got no pay. We came back from the tank by a new road 19 miles long, which had been begun in better times by the neighbouring ryots at their own expense, and which is now being finished as a relief work. I saw that the earthwork on this road also was being paid at piece-work[1] rates. The masonry culverts were charged against the ordinary maintenance grant from local funds. . . . .

'Seeing that so little was spent on relief in this district compared to the adjoining subdivisions of Pennekonda and Mudanapalli, though the population is about the same—600,000 in each case—I made particular enquiries whether the deputy commissioner and his officers thought that enough relief was given. The amildar of Sreemwaspuram, whom I just met, the deputy commissioner, and the Kolar amildar seem to be all very confident that there are no deaths from starvation, and that the people who do not come to the works or to the relief houses are getting along somehow.[2] Every patel (village headman) and shanbhog (village accountant) in the district has received clear orders to relieve any person who may be in danger of

[1] 'Both at Kolar and in Bangalore the baskets used by the women for carrying earth on relief works seemed about double the size used on relief works I have recently seen in British districts.'

[2] 'I have since seen in Bangalore Mr. S. Venkat Veeradaiengar, who was in charge of Kolar district during December and January, while Mr. B. Krishnaiengar was away. He, too, expresses full confidence that people did not die of starvation during those months. Colonel Pearse, commissioner of the division, also endorsed the opinions expressed on this matter by his subordinates, the deputy commissioners of Kolar.'

starving within their jurisdictions, and to send the bill in to the amildar. As yet no patel in the Kolar taluk has sent in any such bill, though each amildar has an allotment of money to meet such bills. No funds have been placed with the patels for the defrayal of charges of this kind, and the patels just at present do not get their full incomes, now that the land revenue collections are slack. It seems that there is need for special steps to ensure and supervise the fulfilment of the orders given to the patels on this subject, or else people may be left unrelieved and may die in remote villages.

'Occasionally the deputy commissioner has heard of allegations of deaths caused in part by hunger; for instance, two people who died in the dispensary were said to have been reduced by want. Now that cholera is about in the district, sudden deaths occur, and they are put down sometimes to cholera and sometimes to hunger. I called on Miss Anstey, a lady missionary, who speaks the Canarese language very well, and takes the closest interest in the people. She said that stories had reached her of deaths from starvation, but she only returned to Kolar ten days ago, and no such cases had come under her own notice. She believed, however, that scarcity of food must have accelerated some deaths in a time like this.

'I am particular about this, because the scale of expenditure in Kolar contrasts strongly with that in the adjoining taluks of Bellary and Cuddapah, and I wished to exhaust possible sources of information as to the sufficiency of Kolar relief measures. The deputy commissioner has been twelve years in the command of this district; he knows the people, they know him, he is their fellow-countryman, and is accessible to them at all times; personally he is kind and charitable.[1] He

[1] I heard incidentally from the lady missionary, Miss Anstey, mention of

says that if there were starvation, he believes he would be the first to hear of it. He has given strict orders and makes constant enquiries on the matter. He is aware that many of his district people (perhaps 3,000 in all) go over to work in Bellary and Mudanapalli. The authorities of those districts have written to him, and he has explained that the people have works open close to their homes, but they not unnaturally prefer a fair daily wage and light work to piece-work pay only. If piece-work were exacted over the border, then he believes that none of the Kolar people would trouble the Bellary or Mudanapalli relief works.

'But about the future of the cattle there is cause for anxiety. Many must have died, and the deputy commissioner is aware that ryots have sold away good cattle for merely nominal prices. The chief commissioner has opened the reserved forests, and ryots are allowed to take away grass thence free. As yet these forests have not been opened to cattle for grazing. The deputy commissioner thinks that there may be some little fodder left, ragi straw, cholum straw (kurbi) and jungle grass; for the ryots will not yet take the trouble to prepare prickly pear for their cattle. Yet the deputy commissioner, his *locum tenens* in December last, and his assistant, have each of them in different parts of the district demonstrated to the people by experiment on a large scale that the prickly pear, when properly prepared, is eaten by and supports cattle. The Kolar taluk, the Malwagul taluk, and other parts of the district abound with prickly pear, so there is an important resource still available for the cattle.'

the deputy commissioner's private charity, and I then with difficulty extracted from him, as bearing on this point, that his cash subscription to relief houses amounts to 325 rs. a month, besides the cooked food he distributes to mendicants at his own house every evening. His salary is 1,300 rs. a month.—C. B.

In forwarding the foregoing memoranda of facts ascertained on the spot regarding the famine in the Mysore province, Sir Richard Temple says, 'I communicated unreservedly to the district and other superior officers my views regarding the situation in the tracts which I visited, and the result of my experience of famine affairs in other parts of India. All the civil and engineering officers of Mysore whom I met, evinced a humane zeal to save human life and to mitigate the present calamity, together with a careful regard to the financial interests of the Government under which they are serving.'

Yet, notwithstanding all this favourable comment, in less than six months the worst scenes of distress and demoralisation which characterised the famine period occurred in Mysore. The agency in August was the same as in February.

The large projects referred to in one of Mr. Bernard's memorandums had been already considered by the chief commissioner. The heavy cost involved in these undertakings—estimated in the case of the Mysore Railway at 50 lakhs, and in that of the Marikanwe Reservoir at 22 lakhs of rupees—had deterred Mr. Saunders from recommending that the Mysore State should embark in undertakings which could not be fully accomplished with the means at his disposal after providing for the requirements of the present famine; but he now put himself in communication with the Government of India on the subject of carrying out, if necessary, and gradually, the more important earthworks of the Mysore Railway with the existing Public Works Establishment at his disposal.

The official reports of the period bear out the view which Sir Richard Temple and his lieutenant expressed. The word 'starvation,' which was frequently to be

met with in earlier stages of the scarcity now appears nowhere, or if mentioned at all, in such a connection as this:—'Some notice has been attracted,' said a commissioner to the Gundlupet taluk and to the Biligirviangam Hills, 'to reports that many thousands of persons were subsisting on the seed of the bamboo, a fact supposed to indicate the verge of starvation; but these facts can scarcely be regarded in that light, for whenever the bamboo seeds, opportunity is taken to gather the crop, as was noticed by Mr. Stokes in Nagar in 1838, and since that time by many other officers, including myself. Mr. Stokes remarks: "The seed of the bamboo, called by the natives bidar akki (bamboo rice), when procurable, is collected by the poorer classes and used as a substitute for rice or ragi." This, however, happens but rarely, as the whole crop of bamboos of a particular species comes into bearing in the same season, dies, and is replaced by the crop from its seed.'

Enquiries also were made in a particular village on March 3, regarding the means by which food supplies were obtained and the quantity consumed daily. Twelve villagers were interrogated by Colonel Hay, the commissioner, and the following facts were gleaned:—

'No. 1 is the head of the family, consisting of thirteen persons, and pattadar of lands assessed at 25 rs. The usual quantity of food was ten seers, at the rate of three-quarters of a seer per head. It is now reduced to eight seers, or half a seer per head. Instead of ragi ball, ambli or gruel is issued. Horse-gram or ballar, which was invariably used formerly, is now dispensed with.

'No. 2 is a pattadar of 30 rs. lands, having a family of four in all. The ration has been reduced from three-quarters to half a seer per head.

'No. 3 holds 20 rs. lands, and is the head of a family of ten persons. The food varies from three-quarters to half a seer per head.

'No. 4 owns 10 rs. lands, and has four dependents. The rations issued now are three-quarters of a seer per head against one seer ordinarily. The stock in hand will last seven or eight days.

'No. 5 holds lands assessed at 15 rs., and has six persons depending on him for support. The reduction in the number of rations issued ordinarily is a quarter of a seer, or three-quarters of a seer per head against one seer consumed ordinarily.

'No. 6 is a 5-rupee pattadar, with four dependents. The rations have been reduced from one to half a seer per head. Two bullocks were sold two months ago to the Waddars who were employed on the tank work for 15 rs. From this amount the food supplies have been obtained up to date. There is a small balance still available from which fifteen or twenty days' supplies will be obtained. When this is exhausted he intends to borrow money.

'No. 7 is an insignificant patta-holder. He depends mainly on the wages obtained as a village labourer. He shifts and replaces tiles, raises and repairs mud-walls, or does field-work. The rate of local wages is 2 annas daily. He complains that by drinking ambli he has hardly sufficient physical strength to work hard, and that on several occasions when he was not able to obtain any wages or grain, he and his wife subsisted entirely on a quarter or half a seer of fried and boiled tamarind seeds. The process of preparing these seeds fit for food is simple. The seeds are first fried or pounded into powder, and after the powder thus pounded has been sufficiently boiled in water, it is eaten with a small quantity of salt. This food is not wholesome, and although it, if continued, checks starvation to some extent, it is injurious. Has generally been able to find work in the villages without going to the public works.

'No. 8, a pattadar of 7 rs. lands. He has to support three persons besides himself. Two he-buffaloes were sold to a Madigar of the village, who went to the coffee plantations a month ago, for 6 rs. each, upon which the family are living.

'No. 9 represents the head of a family of seven persons, including himself. The quantity now consumed is reduced to a quarter of a seer per head. He keeps a pack bullock which he takes to Channapatna twice a week, and brings grain for the merchants at Basral. The hire is half a rupee. With this sum he buys five seers of ragi at Channapatna, which is sufficient for two or three days' consumption for himself and his family.

'No. 10 is the head of a family of six persons, and pays 12 rs. Kandayam. The rations have been reduced from three-quarters to half a seer per head. He borrowed 50 rs. from his relative, Bora Sette, of Devegandanakoppal, in the Malvalli taluk, six months ago. To this must be added 30 rs., realised by the sale of thirty sheep which were sold to the butchers of Seringapatam and Waddars of Mandya, at an average rate of 1 rupee per head. With these sums food supplies are obtained.

He has got a balance of 10 or 12 rs. in hand; when this has been exhausted, he intends to sell one or two sheep more. The stock now in hand consists of fifteen sheep, four buffaloes, and one cow.

'No. 11. The number of dependents is seven, and the assessment of the lands is 20 rs. Ration is reduced from three-quarters to half a seer. The stock in hand will be sufficient for twenty days hence, after which ragi will have to be bought, the money required for this being obtained by the sale of some of the sheep belonging to him.

'No. 12 is a 5-rupee pattadar, having four persons depending upon him for support. Two sheep were sold, one for 3 rs. to the commissioners' camp, and one for 2 rs. to the Ganda of the village. These sums will be sufficient for buying grain for two months.

'No. 13 pays 40 rs. Kandayam. He is also a grain-dealer; he hires four or five pack bullocks and brings ragi from Channapatana twice a week. He obtains a profit of half a seer of ragi to every rupee worth of ragi bought at that place. Two cows were sold four months ago to some of the ryots of Kankanhalli for want of fodder.'

During March and April the official records contained little else than copies of correspondence between the Madras Government and the chief commissioner regarding the large numbers of people who migrated to the Bellary and other districts, and became a charge on the Presidency funds. Similar disputation occurred with the Wynaad planters about the case of Mysore people on coffee estates during the slack season.

On April 6 Sir Richard Temple again paid a hurried visit to Mysore. He noted the following changes which had occurred in the relief operations and their results:—

(1) The distressed districts are much the same as before stated, except that severe distress has declared itself in the northern taluks of the Mysore district.

(2) The number of labourers on the relief works has increased somewhat, and so also have the numbers on charitable relief, thus:—

Name of district	Total number on relief works		Number on charitable relief	
	In January	On March 15	In January	March 15
Bangalore . . .	13,000	18,200	11,500	10,300
Municipality . .	—	1,000	—	6,200
Kolar	8,500	8,700	3,700	4,200
Tumkur . . .	8,900	10,600	2,100	18,200
Mysore. . . .	5,500	9,800	3,700	1,900
Municipality . .	—	200	—	1,600
Hassan. . . .	9,700	7,100	4 200	1,400
Shimoga . . .	1,200	3,200	1,500	300
Kadoor. . . .	6,300	3,000	1,400	800
Chittaldroog. . .	6,000	7,800	1,800	1,800
Total . .	59,100	69,600	29,900	46,700

(3) Some of the increase is said to be due to the efficient village relief that is now being carried out. The munsif's and civil court establishments are now employed on relief work, now that their ordinary business is so slack. For each distressed taluk a sufficient relief staff has been appointed. Villages are really visited, and patels (village headmen) are kept up to their duty by responsible officers, whose weekly diaries show what is being done and how useful the village relief is.

(4) Ample number of relief works are opened and ready to be opened in every district of the province.

(5) The importations of grain by railway into the Mysore province have gone on increasing. They averaged 330 tons a day in January; they were 530 tons a day during the last week of March. Since the rain of Sunday (April 1) prices are cheaper, and importations have somewhat slackened. Of this total, only about 30 tons a day as yet comes by the Negapatam route.

Sir Richard was still of opinion that the results of relief administration compared favourably with the neighbouring districts of the Madras Presidency, namely, the Ceded districts and Kurnool, even after all the eco-

nomy and reduction which had been introduced into those districts. He was still of the opinion expressed in his minute dated February 14, that the Government of India and the chief commissioner might be satisfied with the progress of relief affairs in the province of Mysore. Already favourable rain had (April 1) fallen over the whole province, prices had fallen, and the people were taking courage.

Before the end of that month, the reports of Mysore officials began again to contain ominous intelligence. Colonel Pearse pointed out that the increase in the number of people who had come to the public feeding establishments was very remarkable. It showed, he thought, that they were then reaching, if they had not already done so, 'the most critical period of this really serious famine,' and it proved that the self-sustaining power of the population and the stocks of those whose stores were small, had gradually been entirely consumed. 'It has been very remarkable,' he continued, 'to see how many have held bravely on to their homes, and have shown no ostentation. Though relief is carried out in a true spirit of humanity, and with much care, it does not always reach those who still have a little and decline assistance. Many prevailing prejudices moreover often deter people from coming to the feeding establishments; but it is evident that very serious want must be felt by large numbers of the population at present, and that all their money or their stock of grain is gone; for very many prejudices must have given way at once when in a few weeks the numbers applying for public relief in the shape of cooked food rose from 22,370 to 45,540, or more than doubled in a short period of time.'

The same officer further said: 'The mortality, both amongst cattle and human beings, will now be adverted

to. I regret very much to be obliged to state that it continues very high. There are still good draught cattle all over the country, but the herds which used to be driven out in hundreds and thousands to graze on the common lands are fast disappearing. These were the animals that supplied the ryots with manure, and the cattle for the plough, threshing floor, &c., and enabled him to work his land satisfactorily. These herds included moreover nearly all the cows, and their loss will be a very serious matter, and will be felt by the people generally, and the cultivators more especially, for several years to come.

'The mortality in cattle has been as noted below for each district during the four weeks under review:—

Bangalore.	3,757
Kolar	9,288
Tumkur	11,960
Total . . .	25,005

'I will now advert to the mortality among the people generally. I regret to be obliged to report that it continues to be most serious. The reported deaths aggregated 10,205 for the four weeks ending April 7, and the death-rate does not appear to have since diminished. In the Tumkur district no sooner does cholera abate in one taluk or large town, than it suddenly bursts out again in a most virulent form somewhere else. The town of Chiknayakanhalli, which until recently was perfectly healthy, experienced a sudden outburst of the disease, which is now carrying off daily from 30 to 50 of the population in that one spot. It was at that place, a few days ago, that one of our best and ablest assistants, Mr. Woodcock, noted both for his zeal and high integrity, caught the disease and died on the road when returning to head-quarters.'

The rain which Sir Richard Temple reports as

having fallen on April 1 proved to be a passing shower merely, and for a long time afterwards no more rain fell. One noteworthy fact in connection with the Famine Delegate's visit is that the zeal for economy which marked his presence in Madras altogether left him when he reached Mysore.[1] There is no mention in his minutes or memoranda of the necessity for reducing the rations on the score of economy. And yet, seeing that the Government of India were using trust funds, were administering the State of Mysore for the youthful Maharaja till he should be old enough himself to rule, if economy were imperatively necessary anywhere it was in Mysore. The Bangalore correspondent of the *Times of India* remarked:—'The Temple test, which has worked such evil in other places, has not been put in force in this province, I am thankful to say, and though the money earned on the relief works is small enough, I think upon the whole matters are going on very fairly.' The Mysore scale of diet was a little more liberal than that introduced in Madras (the 1 lb. ration), but very little, 45 tolas of flour being given instead of 40.

A glimpse of the state of things on May 1 can be gathered from the following paragraphs:—

'There are a good many deaths from starvation recorded, and I am at a loss to understand why this should be. The Government has opened relief kitchens in different places, and it professes to feed all those who are in want, but still people die of sheer starvation. It may be that the people will not go to the places where food is to be obtained for fear of losing their caste, and

[1] An explanation of this has been vouchsafed by a close observer of the crisis as follows:—'The reason why nothing was said in Mysore of economy was that economy had already been carried out to an extent which could not be surpassed. It was impossible to be *more* economical, so Sir Richard Temple's line was to praise the efficiency of Mysore administration, and to intimate that Madras too might be efficient as well as economical.'

prefer to die than be contaminated, though I can hardly think that many would be of this way of thinking. I have heard another reason given, and that is that at some of the kitchens the quantity of food given is not enough to support life, and people do not care to go to the places where they are only relieved in name and not in reality. In some kitchens the native superintendents, instead of reporting to their superiors the wants of the people, think that they will be pleasing Government by saving as much as possible. I know one kitchen where 20 rs. were allowed daily for condiments, and the native in charge of the kitchen only spent four, and he was perfectly amazed when instead of being praised for saving money for Government, he was told that he had done very wrong, and that a repetition would entail upon him the displeasure of his superiors. Although these places are well supervised, such irregularities as these I have mentioned will occur, and the poor wretches who are in want of food are the sufferers. To some of the native officials the death of a few insignificant people signifies nothing as compared with the praise that they think they may obtain from Government for their cleverness in saving a few rupees. They will, no doubt, be taught their duty in time, but not till they have been the means of causing the death of a good many.

'There has been a great increase of those seeking relief at the kitchens, and the last Government returns show that the number went up in one week from 68,641 to 82,501, and it is still on the rise, and must necessarily continue so during the time that the scarcity lasts. The people employed on the relief works are also on the increase, but not to the same extent as those to whom gratuitous relief is given, and this may be accounted for by the way people wander about trying to find employment elsewhere. People in some parts of the province

fancy that they can obtain employment on the coffee plantations, and so they set off, only to find out when they get there that there is nothing for them to do, and so they try somewhere else till they either obtain what they want, or else get so weak that they have to go to the relief kitchens, or it may be that some of them die of want. The last Government report says that the piece-work system that has been introduced is working well, though it also says that only 1 anna 4 pies per head can be obtained, and this sum seems to me remarkably small, and can only just keep body and soul together, and hardly that. The next few days will be watched with the greatest anxiety, for, as I have said, the people say that if rain does not fall we shall have another year of famine, and should this happen the land, at the end of the time, would be quite desolate, and all would have to leave it.'[1]

JULY–AUGUST, 1877.

From the end of April to July 9 there is literally nothing in the published proceedings of the Mysore administration to indicate that there was famine, or even scarcity, in the province. The pages of official records were as bare of fact and incident as many of the fields in the province of produce at that time. Rain had fallen—there is no statement of this in the records—but it was in fitful and partial showers, mocking the husbandman, not helping him. In one place, probably an inch of fall would be recorded, half a mile off only a few cents., or none at all, and the hot sun immediately after blazed out as brightly as before. Heavy plumps and dashes of rain ill-fitted the land for cultivation, nevertheless attempts at cultivation were made, and a

[1] Correspondent of *Times of India*.

good breadth of land was ploughed and sown. But the rains of the south-west monsoon held off, and growing grain was parched and withered.

Little mention has been made of the charitable committees in Mysore, but they were continuing their good work, particularly in Bangalore and other large towns. Private benevolence was exhausted long ere this period, and the exertions of non-official gentlemen, cheerfully given, were accepted by the chief commissioner. In April the central committee at Bangalore bethought themselves of means whereby their funds might be recruited. In 1874, during the famine in Behar, 23,351 rs. were contributed by the people of Mysore. It was thought that Bengal might at this juncture return the compliment, and assist famine-stricken Mysore. The idea had occurred to the central committee in November 1876, but no action was taken then, as it was considered that Bengal having just had a very severe catastrophe in the destruction of 60,000 human beings during a cyclone, when a storm wave passed up the Megna river and submerged in the dead of night a large tract of country, it would not be in good taste to make an appeal then. On April 27 the central committee moved the chief commissioner to communicate with the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. Copies of all the correspondence were forwarded to Sir Ashley Eden, and Mr. Saunders said:—'It is believed that a considerable amount of the surplus contributions collected in aid of the famine in Bengal in 1874 is now in deposit in the Government treasuries in that Presidency, and, if such be the case, the chief commissioner solicits that the present may be deemed a fitting occasion for applying a portion of it towards mitigating the distress now so severely felt in this province.' The reply was not very assuring. It was stated that no surplus remained

from the Bengal relief fund, 1874, the balance formerly in the hands of the relief committee having been appropriated to the purposes of certain charitable institutions. 'Under the existing rules of the Government of India, in the Financial Department, his Honour, however, appealed to the collectors of the districts which benefited by the expenditure of the Bengal relief committee in 1874, to raise subscriptions in aid of the Mysore famine, and if any funds are realised, they will be duly forwarded to you.' It is stated that 25,000 rs. were sent to Mysore as the result of this appeal. The great aid, to the extent of 155,000*l.*, which Mysore subsequently received through the Madras famine relief committee, was given without the Mysoreans having been put to any trouble whatever in its collection.

As the month of July progressed and the monsoon rains fell not, alarm began to be general that a further and sharper crisis was coming. Officers engaged in the work which Sir Richard Temple had highly lauded had less faith in the capacity of the province to cope with the distress than the Delegate. Early in July the commissioner of the Nagar division addressed a letter to the chief commissioner, which has been described as 'the first sign that any Mysore official saw a ray of light.' This is a hard saying, but the meaning evidently is—and events justified its harshness—that no Mysore official, certainly not the chief commissioner, had felt it his duty to take a broad glance over the whole province, and endeavour to comprehend all that was required in meeting distress on so vast a scale as was then existing. Observing that young and middle-aged men were numerous in the relief kitchens, and that a large portion of the labouring population were reduced to a dangerous state of physical weakness, the Commissioner thought the time had come for reducing the number of petty

works, and in their stead to employ gangs of relief coolies on provincial and district works, especially roads, the season for the repair of which had arrived. The work on which the people had been hitherto engaged was contemptuously described as 'filling up holes and ditches.' Those coolies who could not do a day's work should be expected to do as nearly this as possible, and yet be paid good wages, whilst from those who were able-bodied a full day's task ought to be rigidly exacted.[1] The chief commissioner approved of this proposal. From able-bodied coolies a full day's work should be exacted, and from others who were unaccustomed to work, or were in an enfeebled state, a fair task should be required and full wages paid. It was added: 'The system of work referred to should be applied to road repairs and other works carried out under the orders of revenue officers, and it is probable that the chief engineer will be able to arrange for the employment of the distressed portion of the population on similar works as well as on tank repairs in progress under the Public Works Department, on similarly equitable terms, provided that the different classes of labourers can be satisfactorily segregated.' This was eminently wise action, but full force was not given to the policy until a new *régime* came in. It was afterwards proved that

[1] Up to this time two sets of officers had been enunciating principles which were in direct opposition to each other, but which were never brought into the light of clear discussion or reconciled in any way. The chief commissioner and the revenue officers said, 'All the people who can work at all ought to be made to work, and not be fed gratis.' Consequently they drafted them off from kitchens to relief works under Civil or Department of Public Works officers. The Department of Public Works said: 'Our business is with able-bodied coolies who can work at piece-work rates and earn enough to live thereby; we won't take weak coolies.' It is not possible to keep two systems going side by side. So the Public Works Department officers turned away those whom the Civil officers sent. Colonel Campbell's merit was that he saw this divergence and showed how to reconcile the two views, how to work able-bodied and weak coolies on the same work.

the Department of Public Works was to blame for the non-carrying out of this policy, as its head did not approve of his officers undertaking the work required at their hands.

Sad sights were being witnessed in Bangalore and elsewhere. Official and non-official testimony were at one in describing serious distress. Every day large numbers of emaciated and distressed persons, non-residents, were collected and sent out of the cantonment of Bangalore to a relief camp some distance off, and though every effort had been and was being made to afford them shelter, yet the accommodation at these places was still quite insufficient to meet such requirements.[1] The persons thus deported were in a very distressed and emaciated state, and the mortality, which had always been high, had lately increased to a fearful extent. Mr. Gordon, C.S.I., president of the relief committee, said: 'We cannot hope to keep pace with requirements whilst the steady influx of such persons

[1] The number of wretched objects, especially women and children, one sees wandering about begging or searching for any garbage to stay their hunger, is greater than ever, and dead and dying people are picked up in the streets in daily increasing numbers. Extra hands have been engaged as a kind of famine police—their uniform consisting of a dirty white-and-blue cap—and it is their duty to convey weak and starving people to the relief kitchens, but in spite of this, numbers of such people are to be seen everywhere. Many complaints are made as to the way these people are treated at the relief places—especially in the more out-of-the-way ones—where blows are said to be more freely distributed than food, and only half, or less, of the authorised rations dealt out; the price of the other half being divided amongst the peculators. True or not, this is the general idea, and when I asked a respectable native hawker the other day why, with the food to be had for the asking, there were so many starving people about, his answer was, 'When they do go they get beaten and driven away. The Sirkar gives plenty of money, but it sticks to many hands before reaching the distressed.' The fact is that, without European supervision and increasing vigilance, it is impossible to put a stop to petty peculation and harsh treatment. Visits from officials at certain stated, or at any rate, well-known, hours can easily be arranged for, and the visitor deluded into the belief that everything is working admirably.—*Bangalore Correspondent of Madras Times.*

into Bangalore continues. I am of opinion that really strict, persistent, and strong efforts should be made to prevent these persons from coming into Bangalore. It may not be possible to ensure this altogether, but I believe it may be attained to a very satisfactory extent. It was with this view that the roadside kitchens on the approaches to the town were originally set on foot, but practically distressed wanderers have not been much interfered with nor compelled to stay at any particular place.' The inefficiency of the administration is again brought out here. The outside kitchens were established to stop immigrants, but nothing was done to carry out this intention. The people were fed and allowed to go, so that the kitchens were a help to people flocking to large towns, not a hindrance. Every day the situation grew worse, and in Bangalore alone, in July, there was an extra population of 25,000 beings, all famine immigrants; while in the districts they were said to be dying like 'rotten sheep.' The monsoon had proved a failure throughout the province. Bad rice, 'full of grit,' as one newspaper correspondent described it, was selling at $3\frac{3}{4}$ and 4 Madras seers for the rupee, beggars were multiplying, dead or dying people, on the roads and in the streets, were no uncommon sights, and in every way the strain was becoming tenser every day. The railway was a help, and without it things would have been a thousandfold worse; but all the employés were overworked, sufficient extra hands not having been taken on, while the rolling stock was palpably quite insufficient for existing needs. It was said, 'Carts are sent from Madras now with every grain train, and the rice is carried off almost as soon as received, but yet the cry is "More! more!" Meantime, while distress is thus increasing with rapid strides, the rain still holds off, until now it is almost too late for it to do much good.'

This was the state of things in Bangalore; in the outlying districts things were quite as bad, probably worse.[1] The relief camps were not popular: the people would suffer almost inconceivable distress rather than face the cruel kindness of some of their own countrymen. A gentleman in Bangalore, after describing some saddening scenes, said: 'If things are bad here, they are infinitely worse at some of the district relief houses, where the native underlings can do almost as they like. A friend of mine was some time ago at a small hamlet within 40 miles of this, and seeing the inhabitants in the last stage of emaciation and distress, he asked the driver of his luggage cart, who was no famine sufferer himself, why they did not go to the relief kitchen at the next large village. The man replied without hesitation, "They had better die here quietly than undergo the treatment they would receive there." These things show what the people themselves think on the subject.'[2]

[1] Mr. James Russell, coffee-planter, Highfield Estate, wrote a letter to Captain Shaw, superintendent of Coorg, in which he said:—

'I have the honour to bring to your notice that the suffering and deaths from starvation, principally on the part of wayfarers, along the roads in all parts of this province—to represent the state of matters in regard to whom Mr. Hay and myself conferred with you some time ago, ere you went upon leave—still seems, according to all I see and hear, to go on unabated.

'Mr. McDonald, of Cota Bita Estate, told me incidentally, a day or two ago, of having to bury, near one of the semi-public roads on the estate, four bodies of men who had died, huddled together, during the night, and on all estates burying those who have fallen whilst wandering about is an almost daily occurrence.

'On my previous round, supervising the working of coffee estates in my charge, Mr. Bidie, Benlomond Estate, reported having buried thirty bodies, within two or three days, from the public road which passes his bungalow, the exceptionally high rate during that period being due apparently to the sudden setting in of inclement rainy weather.'

[2] These statements, I am assured, are to be distrusted to some extent. The dislike to kitchens is natural enough, and over 200,000 persons were fed in them in August. The mortality was so great that to go to a kitchen was, in popular parlance, synonymous with going to a place to die. This was partly due to the one-meal system. Famished people got one large meal, could not digest it, and died, partly of repletion, partly of want.

Early in August the chief commissioner increased his staff by drafting some officers out of the Revenue Survey Department (which had already supplied some very valuable assistants) on to famine relief. Three apothecaries and six hospital assistants were sent from Bengal.

Reference has been already made, in a previous portion of this volume, to the fact that the system on which the famine was fought in the affected Presidencies and the provinces was diverse. In Bombay the Department of Public Works did excellently; in Madras the department did badly, through no fault of its own; in Mysore the department seems to have blundered wofully, through mistaken ideas regarding his profession which were cherished by Colonel Sankey, R.E. The story of the wrong state into which things speedily got has been told in a letter to the (London) *Spectator* of September 3, 1877. The writer of that letter says: 'Bombay, when matters were at the blackest, had about 210,000 on relief works, and 60,000 on gratuitous relief. Mysore, on September 1, had 50,000 on relief works, and 230,000 on gratuitous relief. And even those 50,000 were not hardly any of them relief labourers. About half were under the Public Works Department, and its officers thought it their duty to adhere to their established system of petty contract and payment by the piece, and to refuse to move out of their groove to meet the famine, so that their labourers were the usual number and class of men who would be found at work in any year, and who, being paid at contract rates, were necessarily able-bodied.

'Nor were the works under the civil officers much better; they, too, were based on estimates—so much earthwork, so many rupees; and the man in charge saw that he had to complete the work for the sanctioned

amount, and that if he took on the weak and emaciated he would soon outrun his estimate; so here, too, there was a tendency to hustle the feeble, the very people for whose benefit the work was started, away in favour of the strong labourer. Thus all real relief got concentrated into the "kitchens" or dining places, at which a meal, or sometimes two meals, was given to all comers. These institutions were no doubt of great use in saving life, and were managed in the most kindly and charitable manner, but they were not worked so as to be connected with the lead up to relief works, and you might see 3,000 people, many of them able-bodied, sit down to eat their meal, and go home when it was done, while a road or a tank close by languished with only ten or twenty labourers on it. Another mistake was that this relief did not go far enough; many people had fallen into a state in which the meal was only sufficient to prolong, not to save, life. The history of hundreds of such cases is shortly told. The pauper could come for a few days from his village, two or three miles off, eat his meal, and crawl back again. One day he would be overtaken by rain, and would get an attack of fever, and be unable to go; or he would arrive too late; after losing that day's food, he had no strength to come next day all that distance, but lay down on the roadside in a ditch, and the dogs were the first relief officers who were aware of him.'

The crisis in Mysore had now come. Things had reached a disastrous pitch in August, and a strong hand at the helm was needed. How things had gone from bad to worse may be gathered from the following table:—

	On works under Department of Public Works	Civil agency works	Gratuitous relieved	Total
March	31,081	41,735	43,592	116,408
April	31,495	29,740	74,569	135,804
May	34,499	30,011	103,392	167,902
June	26,807	28,066	114,109	168,982
July	20,777	26,325	144,861	191,963
August . . .	22,644	25,981	199,375	247,000

Affairs were in a disorganised condition generally: the people were being demoralised by gratuitous relief; the reserve fund of the State had disappeared; and the province had comparatively nothing in the way of works to show in return for the expenditure which was incurred. The chief commissioner was emphatically not the man for such a period as the province was passing through. Famine administration was wrecked on three rocks, viz.:—(1) Mistaken economy; (2) Weakness in official *personnel*; and (3) The want of a strong will at head-quarters. Instead of leading, Mr. Saunders was led.

As regards the first point, mistaken economy, the chief commissioner evidently fancied that it was his duty to maintain intact the surplus of 46,00,000 rs. which had accumulated in the treasury. The consequence was that grants were made very grudgingly, particularly to works which, in their position as an important part of a proper famine policy, Mr. Saunders failed to apprehend. The result of this was that crop being gone and the people without money and without work, for every thousand rupees refused for works at the beginning he had to pay out a lakh to relief kitchens in the end. The defective ideas as to sound finance which existed in the administration is brought out clearly in a letter from Mr. Hudson, the deputy accountant-general, written towards the end of July.

Mr. Krishnaiengar, C.S.I., had suggested that the Department of Public Works should take over charge of a widely spread system of relief works which should not interfere with the ordinary arrangements of the department. The expenditure on these scattered works was expected to amount to 5,000 rs. per mensem per taluk. This, applied to the eighty taluks of Mysore, would involve an outlay in the eight remaining revenue months of the year, of 40 lakhs of rupees. If there were a year's famine, as seemed only too probable at that juncture, the rate of outlay would be 60 lakhs, to which adding 25 lakhs for the public works that were not to be interfered with, showed the necessity for 85 lakhs being spent on works of various sorts, exclusive of kitchen expenditure.

The deputy accountant-general was requested to report upon this proposal from a financial point of view, and he came to the conclusion that it would involve an expenditure which would result in the deficit of the year being 52 lakhs. It may be assumed from collateral circumstances—there is no direct evidence on the subject—that Mr. Saunders sanctioned this view of the situation. That it was essentially weak and untrustworthy was shown by Colonel Sankey, who, whatever his faults may have been in other respects, proved himself able to take a correct forecast of the pecuniary position of the State. 'To take a desponding view of the financial position of Mysore,' said Colonel Sankey, 'is to me, I confess, incomprehensible. If the past history of the country be fairly looked at, commencing with a gross revenue of 79·6 lakhs in 1834-35, we have the average amounts raised for State purposes, as taken from the administration reports, as follows :—

Crops five years under British Administration	Average income	Average expenditure			Surplus available for investment after deducting requisite cash balance	Interest lost by non-investment
		Public works	Other heads	Total		
	Lakhs	Lakhs	Lakhs	Lakhs	Lakhs	Lakhs
1834–35 to 1839–40	73·4	1·4	73·7	75·1	12·5	3·1
1839–40 to 1844–45	74·6	2·6	69·1	71·1	24·5	6·0
1844–45 to 1849–50	77·3	3·4	73·5	76·9	29·5	7·4
1849–50 to 1854–55	79·6	4·9	75·7	77·6	39·5	9·8
1854–55 to 1859–60	85·7	8·3	74·1	79·4	55·0	13·8
1859–60 to 1864–65	101·2	11·8	87·0	98·8	92·5	18·5
1864–65 to 1869–70	105·8	16·7	90·5	107·2	(*a*)	
1869–70 to 1874–75	114·9	15·0	87·5	102·8	(*a*)	

(*a*) Raja's debt paid and surplus invested in these years.

'. . . Without wishing to question the beneficial effects of the fiscal changes introduced by Mr. Bowring, as also his other measures in regard to the Revenue Survey, Forests, and indeed all branches of the civil administration, which were followed up so ably by Sir Richard Meade, no impartial person can, I think, doubt that this great spring has been mainly due to the more liberal policy of public works which of late years has been adopted.

'When even no famine or other calamity threatened, the late chief commissioner wrote as follows to the Government of India:—"Should the funds prove to be insufficient to meet all the outlay connected with the railway, Colonel Meade would propose that the Mysore State should borrow from the British Government, on such terms as may be fixed by it," &c. Mr. Bowring held the same view, and with a proposal of this kind, emanating from such a cautious, able, and experienced administrator, the mere reproduction of the proposal, under the more pressing circumstances of to-day, should not, I submit, seem strange. It is difficult, I am aware, to free ourselves of the traditional financial ideas prevalent in Mysore, derived directly from previous native

Governments, but as these have in the past led to the most unfortunate results, they must, I submit earnestly, if followed now, bring about the disaster which it is now our special duty to ward off. All who have attentively studied Mysore history must acknowledge that nothing could have been more mistaken than to allow the annual surpluses, commencing with 1842-43, to remain unexpended on useful public works or other equally beneficial objects. The net results of the system of putting away the talent in the napkin are shown in the last column of my table, which is calculated after making all due allowances for the requisite cash balances, and shows a clear loss to the country of 58½ lakhs from non-investment of available surplus funds. The loss of this money to taxpayers, or rather of the prosperity which an enlightened policy of public works would have conferred, though sufficiently serious, is as nothing to the other evils which sprang out of this accumulation and burial of money, but which are too painful to dwell upon. But grave and lamentable as these mistakes were, we can only now lay them to heart as beacons to avoid the rocks ahead which now loom in close and it may be in fatal proximity. To select this time for stopping works which can give good and useful employment to the able-bodied workers, is to my mind little short of suicidal.[1] It must have but one certain result, namely, that of driving these people into the ranks of the distressed, to the kitchens, where, it must be feared, demoralisation and death await them.'[2]

A zeal for economy, which afterwards proved to be

[1] Colonel Sankey's remarks show a misapprehension of what was wanted from the Public Works Department. All that was asked of Colonel Sankey was that he should give up such works in the Budget as were not suitable for relief, and to substitute others which would be useful; *e.g.*, to give up the roads he desired to make in the Malnad which no 'plain' coolie could go to and live, *i.e.* at that time of the year.

[2] Memorandum by Colonel Sankey, dated August 7, 1877.

no economy, but rather wasteful extravagance, must be put down as the chief cause of the terrible state of affairs which needed grappling with a strong hand.

(2) *Insufficient Administration.*—Indian administrations are all on a peace footing. They are calculated for normal times and ordinary conditions. The administration of Mysore, when the famine came, was as follows: *Revenue*—One chief commissioner, three commissioners of divisions, six deputy commissioners, and other officers. Besides these were officers of the *Public Works* and those on the *Medical* establishment. In ordinary times this establishment suffices for administrative purposes, but it was altogether unable to meet the extraordinary strain of so severe a famine as existed in Mysore. The administration was not singular in this respect. No Government in India can work a famine without a great increase in the number of its officers, nor, indeed, without a special agency. Mr. Saunders made no application for extraneous aid, but seemed to think his own force ample for all the requirements of the State.

(3) The greatest lack of all, however, was *want of driving power at the centre.* Orders were issued from the chief commissioner, bearing the signature of his secretary; like ostrichs' eggs, which are expected to hatch in the sand without any trouble on the part of the parent, they were expected to be obeyed without being looked after. The orders issued were, as a rule, excellent, but officials do not seem to have paid any attention to them, and the central authority never insisted on their being obeyed. One instance may suffice to show this. A most important order was sent forth by Mr. Saunders on February 9, 1877, at Sir Richard Temple's express desire, on village inspection and the issue of grain doles. Some inspection followed—a pre-

vious page contains the result of Colonel Hay's enquiries —but not much was done in this direction, and not a single pound of grain was issued. The Department of Public Works was allowed to do what seemed right in its own eyes, or at the most had to endure a feeble censure such as was administered by the deputy accountant-general, when he said: 'The Public Works staffs have hitherto been too much occupied in departmental work, it may be said, to give attention to relief works under civil officers.' Colonel Sankey's rejoinder to this was as follows:—'I need hardly say that while the ordinary operations of the department have purposely been conducted with a view to afford relief work in its most effective and least demoralising form,[1] the officers have, by advice, by plans, &c., endeavoured to give what aid they could in regard to relief works. Colonel Johnson devoted much time to this, and at the present moment the provision of work for this class is one of my chief duties. Our officers employed on an average 19,000 labourers in January last. The numbers rose in May to a maximum of 36,000, and have now (owing to the demand which necessarily everywhere occurs at the commencement of the monsoon for agricultural labourers, and also to some extent from the elimination of three lakhs from our Budget grant) sunk again to 22,000. This latter number we shall now have to cut down materially to meet the further reduction which has again been ordered in our Budget limit to 15 lakhs.'

It was the same throughout the whole disaster. A strong hand at the helm was lacking, and the ship of State drifted to the rocks.

[1] This was scarcely correct. The Public Works Department tank system was based on the principle of treating tanks series by series or group by group, and thus a large expenditure would be going on in half a taluk, and none in the rest of a district. What was wanted was to stop some of the closely contiguous works, and to scatter them more over the affected parts.

A quotation has been made above from a memorandum by Colonel Sankey, head of the Public Works Department. As of considerable importance in the events which were shortly to occur, an abstract may be given of the scheme of works by which the chief of the department was prepared to meet the exigencies of the situation. If tanks were a provision against famine, food scarcity in Mysore ought to be unknown, for there are 1·4 tanks per square mile of the whole territory. Twelve thousand of these, however, yield no revenue, being breached. As regards the others, it was alleged to be an indisputable fact that weak earthen bunds were the rule in Mysore rather than the exception. An unusually large number of breaches to tanks (101 in three months) had been reported, notwithstanding the lightness of the rainfall. 'It is doubtless true that many breaches have been attributed to cracks produced in the bunds by the long-continued droughts of the last three seasons, but many more have been due, as proved by the returns, to the insufficient height of the bunds.'

In his recommendations how to employ famine labour, Colonel Sankey made much of tank repairs. He said: 'Although, as before noticed, the greatest circumspection must be exercised, and complete professional investigation entered upon in dealing with the increase of capacity of these works (for the most part placed in chains, and dependent one on the other), and rebuilding their sluices, waste weirs, &c., there is on the other hand one point with reference to which no one can make a mistake, unless wilfully, and that is in placing earth on the top and at the back of the tank bund. Even if the work be somewhat overdone, there is no further harm than the expenditure of a little more money than is absolutely necessary. The bund is cer-

tainly none the weaker for the process. Every ryot knows how to carry out the work, and to guard against mistakes or frauds as far as possible, a clear but simple rule was given in the circular (Sir R. Meade's), not only as to how much work was to be done, but how subsequently to check the actual quantity executed.'

These were intended for civil agency works, and by them Colonel Sankey contended the people would be removed from the demoralising influence of relief kitchens, which threatened to grow beyond control. Colonel Sankey was of opinion that the Public Works Department should be directly charged with keeping employed able-bodied labourers only. To enable the department to do this, two things were requisite. First, it must have a scheme of good works; secondly, it must be supplied with money. As regards the first of these heads, he remarks: 'I may observe that in the roads and buildings branch I, more than two years ago, submitted a forecast programme of work, embracing schemes to be carried out from 1875-76 to 1880-81,[1] and not only has this general scheme been accepted by the Government of India, but a large majority of works are in hand. For many of the remainder estimates have been carefully framed and are now ready for execution. In the irrigation branch there has been no less activity. Large undertakings have been entered on, both in improving and extending the great irrigation channels and in bringing to standard some of the most important of the tank series, all of which are capable of supplying a very large amount of employment for labour. The short piece of railway between the railway station at Bangalore and the Petta which has been just sanctioned

[1] This scheme consisted almost entirely of roads, &c., from the Malnad to the Western Coast, unfit for any coolies in September, and for maidan coolies at any time, or, in fact, for relief work at any period, as it was mainly skilled labour which was required.

by the Government of India, is likely to prove most valuable either for a tramway or as an extension of the Madras branch line, and will give large employment. If need be, moreover, the small portion of projected line might be made between the town of Mysore and the Washing Ghât at Seringapatam (some nine miles), and which, like the other, would be very valuable for a tramway, if the complete railway be carried out.' [1]

The funds to provide for these works, it was suggested, might be obtained on loan.

The state of things described in the preceding pages had for some time been causing the Government of India great anxiety, and whilst on his way from Simla H.E. the Viceroy took steps towards introducing improved organisation. For that purpose, in advance of his own visit to Mysore, Lord Lytton deputed two selected officers from the North-West Provinces—Mr. C. A. Elliott, commissioner of Meerut, and Major Scott Moncrieff, R.E.—to assist the chief commissioner. Five military officers were also at once sent to Mysore to assist in controlling relief operations. At this time (August), the chief commissioner had made an applica-

[1] Regarding the carrying out of these plans, Colonel Sankey said:—'If I have succeeded in making myself clear, the system I suggest is to give simple work all over the distressed portions of the country, through the civil officers, to all who may be unable from sufficient reasons to leave their villages, and who ought, if not able-bodied, to be compelled to remain at their homes. For the rest (the able-bodied breadwinners) I would enforce, by all the legitimate influence at the disposal of the administration, their joining the works of this department. There should be no shrinking from using the requisite pressure in regard to this duty, and practically there would be no avoidable hardship in giving effect to the measures, as the able-bodied labourers in this province are accustomed to remove yearly to the Niligeries, the Wynaad, and Coorg in search of engagements, and indeed have done so for several past months, forming often miserable crowds of wanderers. Every one, moreover, acquainted with the native character knows that in such cases as we have now to deal with, they expect the European officer to put down his foot. They look to him not only for guidance, but for compulsory measures to ensure public safety.'

tion to the Government of India for a loan of fifty lakhs. The expenses of the famine had hitherto been defrayed by the proceeds of the invested funds, amounting to 46,16,000 rs. 'This source of supply,' it was said, 'will be exhausted by the end of the current month, and the Budget shows no balance to fall back upon.' The Government of India agreed to grant the loan, as otherwise the Mysore State would be compelled to borrow in the open market—a policy which the Government is not, at any time, prepared to accept in the case of any native State; and the loan was granted, on terms to be fixed afterwards, in the following instalments:—

In October	20 lakhs.
„ November	15 „
„ December	10 „
„ January or February	5 „

CHAPTER III.

A RADICAL CHANGE OF POLICY.

WHILE the Viceroy was travelling from Simla to Southern India during the month of August, most distressing scenes were being witnessed in the streets of Bangalore. No measure of precaution sufficed to keep 'wanderers' from flocking into the streets and thronging the relief kitchens for food. The mortality which prevailed in all relief camps was only too notorious: in the kitchens no shelter was provided, and the paupers being fed only once a day and turned adrift, the mortality was transferred from the sheds of a poor-house to the streets and purlieus of a city. Scenes which were a grave scandal to British rule were occurring in the chief town of a province which had long been administered by English officials. Whichever way the eye turned, dead bodies were to be seen. During August the average number of dead picked up daily in the streets of Bangalore was twenty. From September 1 to 10 the number had increased to forty-one. When troops were marched to the shooting butts for rifle practice the soldiers were horrified with the sight of bodies of men, women, and children, lying exposed and partly devoured by dogs and jackals. People argued, not unnaturally, that if such things occurred at headquarters, most terrible scenes were necessarily to be witnessed in the interior. On any spot in the streets of Bangalore where there was temporary shelter, the poor starved creatures would creep to die: on the pials

(verandahs) of houses, under the shadows of trees and walls, or in a depression in the roadside. Early in the morning the bodies were supposed to be collected by the police, but sometimes they were allowed to lie about uncared for till late in the day. A European gentleman visited the market on a Sunday morning in September, and learned that two dead bodies had been found that morning: one he saw himself, at half-past seven, lying uncared for within a few yards of a stall where vegetables were being laid out for sale. The feeding which was going on at the relief kitchens was of a character that needed a sharp controlling hand, as much for the sake of the people, who were being demoralised, as in the interests of the State, which provided the money for expenditure. Rain had commenced falling in appreciable quantity, and this made matters worse for the 'wanderers,' upon whom the chilliness of the atmosphere and the dampness of the air told with fatal effect.

From the day when the south-west monsoon was due, the ryots did all that men could do to obtain crops from their lands. Showers of rain fell at intervals, and the persistence with which the agriculturists endeavoured to secure a ragi crop in many taluks cannot be too highly commended. In several places they sowed the land no less than three times, the pauses between each downpour of rain having been so prolonged that the previous sowing had either withered or been destroyed by insects before rain to nurture it again fell. The patience and persistence displayed by the Southern India ryot, not in Mysore alone but in all the districts of the Madras Presidency, deserved a better fate than they encountered. In addition to the elements being pitilessly against them, the people must have been shocked by the numerous deaths of relatives and friends, and have been depressed accordingly. In the Nundy-

droog division the total number of reported deaths (only a portion of the whole) from July 15 to August 15, was 11,262, 'a rate of mortality,' remarked Colonel Pearse, 'which, were it continued, would clear off the whole existing population in this division in about fourteen years.'

There were not wanting officers in the Mysore administration who saw, before the Viceroy's arrival, the true principles upon which the famine should be fought. Reference was made to one of these in a previous chapter. Another may be mentioned here. Colonel Pearse, writing in August to the chief commissioner, said :—'The numbers on the relief works have been found to fluctuate according to the rainfall, showing that the cultivators who came to relief works are ready, instead of holding on to Government works, to return to their villages, and endeavour to obtain a crop as soon as there is any appearance of a change in the season, whereas in the feeding establishments the case is different. The numbers are rising, and will continue to rise, until large works are started, when every man, woman, and child who is able to carry a basket should be relegated somewhat relentlessly to work ; but this cannot be done in the absence of continuous work on large projects. Small ones are good in their way, especially when the distress is moderate, but they last only a short time, whereupon the gang is broken up ; and therefore the only plan is to have continuous large projects to supplement the small ones, and to which the people can either be sent, or from which they can be withdrawn, as may seem most advisable.' The remark of the chief commissioner upon this very proper suggestion was feeble and querulous. Says the order thereon : 'The commissioner alludes to the necessity of starting large projects

to afford continuous employment to the famine-stricken people, but does not specify the works of the kind which he would propose.' To do this was not a commissioner's duty, but Colonel Pearse could well have replied that, many months previously, he had laid before the commissioner a large scheme of works, which scheme was not approved. There was no need, however, to make reply. About the time that the chief commissioner's order was penned, the Viceroy arrived at Bangalore. Mr. C. A. Elliott and Major Scott Moncrieff had preceded his Excellency by several days, had made themselves acquainted with the difficult task to be undertaken in bringing things back to their normal standard, and were ready to endeavour to put matters on a better footing.

When the Viceroy reached Bangalore he received a report of the condition of affairs from Mr. Elliott and Major Scott Moncrieff. From their statement and from the communications his Excellency held with the chief civil officers of the province, as also from what he himself saw at Bangalore, he was forced to the conclusion that matters were even worse than he had anticipated; that the provision of proper relief works had been entirely neglected; that gratuitous relief, which had increased to an inordinate extent, had been administered in a lax and unsystematic manner; that crime had greatly increased; that people were wandering from Mysore into other districts in vast numbers; and that the mortality, both in hospitals and among the wanderers, was terrible.

The particulars published in Chapter II. of this narrative will show how the numbers relieved respectively on works and under the system of gratuitous relief varied during the previous six months, and how utterly disproportionate was the former to the latter class. But even this statement did not adequately represent

the whole evil. Lord Lytton found while at Bangalore that the people employed on works under the organisation of the Department of Public Works were not, properly speaking, relief labourers at all. The works were not special relief works, but were those sanctioned in the ordinary way under the annual Budget allotment; and the labourers employed on them were the ordinary able-bodied coolies, paid by piece-work and engaged by the ordinary petty contractors of the department. That these works kept a number of the labourers so employed from the necessity of applying for relief cannot be doubted, but in no other sense could they be called relief works; and the system under which they were employed had been already emphatically condemned by the Government of India in its communications with the chief commissioner of Mysore.

Lord Lytton was anxious to introduce an improved system of management without any undue interference with the ordinary administration of the country, and his Excellency found that the chief commissioner was fully prepared to accept and carry out the views of the Government of India. Mr. Saunders had in fact previously issued instructions in accordance with the general policy of the Government of India; and these instructions, had he seen that they were being carried out, would probably have insured the timely introduction of a proper system of relief works.

The chief engineer of the province, Colonel Sankey, however, had objected to the employment of the Public Works establishment otherwise than on the ordinary contract system, and had omitted to provide any special works for relief purposes. Even on the brief extension of the Bangalore railway, which had already been sanctioned by the Government of India, the department had declined to employ more than three hundred per-

sons out of the thousands who were ready to labour, and whom the civil officers were anxious to draft from gratuitous relief to works. Colonel Sankey, it was admitted, was an officer of much experience in Mysore, and had the reputation of being a very able engineer. He had under him an unusually strong departmental staff in proportion to the size of the province, and the Viceroy hoped that he would prove a valuable assistant in carrying out the policy of making large relief works, under departmental supervision, the backbone of the whole relief system. Lord Lytton accordingly explained his views to him at some length, first in a private interview, and afterwards at the conference which he held with the chief commissioner and other officers. Colonel Sankey persisted in objecting to the employment of his departmental organisation for the supervision of real relief works. He brought forward a scheme of works (summarised in Chapter II.) which were, he said, ready to be put in hand; but these, when examined, proved insufficient to give employment to more than one-half the requisite number of people needing work; further, many of them were situated in unhealthy parts of the province, to which relief labour could not be carried at that season of the year; and even for this instalment Colonel Sankey repeated his unwillingness to employ any of his regular staff, or to divert them from the ordinary sanctioned works. Those works, opened for relief purposes, he proposed to start with only such additional assistance as the Government of India might be able to afford him from other provinces. This came out very clearly in the conference, similar to that held in Madras, in which the Viceroy in the fullest, freest, and frankest manner discussed the situation with the local officers, whose want of due appreciation of the circumstances with which they had to cope had brought

about the state of things which needed the heroic remedy the Viceroy did not shrink from applying. The chief engineer's opinions being what they were, it became clear that to entrust Colonel Sankey with the execution of the new famine policy was to ensure the failure of it. It would in any circumstances be a matter of great difficulty to withdraw people from the loose, undisciplined, idle life of relief kitchens (where they were fed gratuitously, and having got their meal, might employ the rest of their time as they thought best) to the strictly enforced tasks and regular discipline of properly supervised public works; and his Excellency felt that he could not justly or with due regard to the interest of the public rely upon the exertions of Colonel Sankey for the successful prosecution of a policy which that officer seemed unable to accept in principle and unwilling to adopt in practice. Lord Lytton, therefore, took advantage of a wish expressed by Sir Andrew Clarke for the temporary assistance of a deputy secretary during the pressure caused by famine work in the central office of the Department of Public Works, and Colonel Sankey was appointed to that duty. Major Scott Moncrieff, R.E., was transferred to the temporary chief engineership of the province. The Viceroy was satisfied to leave in his hands the execution of the Government policy.

The main object of the improvement in the famine administration was providing sufficient relief works, on a proper system, for the destitute poor. In addition to accomplishing this, Lord Lytton directed the chief commissioner's attention to the necessity of reorganising his relief kitchens, and maintaining them as closed camps under proper discipline and control. He ordered that those in Bangalore which were supported from Government funds, and which had quite outgrown the

supervision of the volunteer committee by whom they had hitherto been administered, should be placed under the responsible control of Government officers ;[1] and to

[1] '*To J. D. Gordon, Esq., C.S.I., President of the Charitable Relief Committee.*

'Sir,—I am directed by the chief commissioner to inform you that the Government of India has expressed its opinion that "all relief camps which are kept up by Government money should be placed under Government organisation, so that one system of control and one scale of rations may be applied to all." Under these circumstances Mr. Saunders considers that the time has come when the relief camps in and around the town of Bangalore should be placed under the direct charge of an executive officer or officers appointed by himself.

'2. But in relieving your committee of the onerous charge which they voluntarily undertook, and which they have discharged for so many months with such zeal and humanity, Mr. Saunders cannot withhold an expression of his sincere thanks for the efficiency with which your supervision of the kitchen management has been carried out, and for the self-devotion with which you personally, and the members of the committee generally, have applied yourselves to the benevolent task of relieving the destitution of the famine-stricken people under your charge.

'3. The chief commissioner proposes to place the Krishnarajpur camp under the deputy commissioner of Bangalore, and the other municipal camps and kitchens under Major Cole, who will, if necessary, have other officers attached to him for the superintendence of individual camps.

'4. The hospitals attached to the different camps will still as heretofore be under the superintendence of Dr. J. Henderson, whose careful and kindly treatment of the sick the chief commissioner gratefully acknowledges.

'5. There is still, however, abundant room for the application of charitable relief, provided they have funds supplied them by private charity to deal with, and the chief commissioner would be sorry to see the committee of which you are president dissolved, especially as there is reason to hope that the Madras committee will remit to Bangalore part of the money which is subscribed in England. Mr. Saunders would particularise as suitable objects for the expenditure of such funds, the supply of hospital comforts, of beds and clothing for the sick, and of clothing for the infirm and aged people who will remain as inmates of the relief camps when the more able-bodied are drafted on to relief works. The orphans of the famine, too, are peculiarly suitable objects for the care of the committee, and the chief commissioner would very gladly see one or more orphanages established and placed under the care of Protestant missionaries. There are many other suggestions, too which may possibly occur to the committee as showing openings in which the administration of private charity may wisely supplement the relief which Government is bound to give, but to cut down to a minimum; and such suggestions Mr. Saunders is well assured you will be ready and glad to adopt.

'6. I am to request that you will explain and make over the accounts of

assist the chief commissioner in carrying out these instructions, the services of Mr. C. A. Elliott, as Famine Commissioner, and of Mr. Wingate, of the Bombay Service, as Additional Secretary, were placed at Mr. Saunders' disposal. Both these officers were carefully selected on account of their special qualifications. In lower grades his Excellency strengthened the hands of the chief commissioner by appointing five military officers to assist in relief works, and by obtaining for him the services of the following additional medical and engineering staff :—

34 Medical Subordinates, in addition to the 14 previously sent.
2 Executive Engineers.
7 Assistant Engineers.
6 Subordinates.

The Viceroy determined, after consulting Mr. Guilford Molesworth, director-general of the State Railways in India, as well as the most experienced local officers, to sanction the commencement of the earthwork of the Bangalore and Mysore Railway, as a famine work. It was specially suitable for this purpose from its situation, the line of country which it passed through, and the facilities it afforded for supervision. When considering the scheme for Mysore relief works, Lord Lytton bore in mind the despatches regarding the Mysore Railway, which conveyed the Secretary of State's instructions that the Mysore savings should be be spent in irrigation works rather than on railway; and only sanctioned the railway earthwork when it had

the Krishnarajpur camp to Captain Gordon Cumming, and of the other camps and kitchens to Major Cole, as soon as possible.

'I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

'A. WINGATE,

'*Addl. Secretary.*'

become quite clear that sufficient irrigation works were not ready in and near the Bangalore district, where 90,000 people were receiving relief. In estimating the necessity and probable effect of this measure, it may be well to remember the character of the irrigation works in Central and Northern Mysore. They are all rain-fed tanks, and their waters fail in a season of drought ; so that the Mysore Railway is undoubtedly a more effective work of famine protection than the ordinary irrigation works of the country. The railway work was begun in two principal sections ; the length which was put in hand, in the first instance, being 46 miles—36 miles at the Bangalore end of the line, and 10 at the Mysore end. The intervening space was to be begun, if necessary, as soon as some questions concerning its alignment had been reconsidered.

As already stated, the Government of India had consented to sanction a loan to Mysore Government of 50 lakhs of rupees. Finding, on his arrival at Bangalore, that the chief commissioner was much pressed for funds, and that the balance of his invested surplus (9 lakhs) could only be sold out at that moment at a sacrifice of from 8 to 10 per cent. discount, the Viceroy sanctioned the drawing at once on the Madras treasury (which was amply supplied) for a first instalment of 10 lakhs on account of the loan, postponing the sale of the invested surplus till a more favourable opportunity.

The Viceroy was much concerned that the Mysore administration had not been able to show some useful works for the many lakhs which had already been spent in famine relief. The question, however, may be asked, why did not the Government of India, under whose direct control the administration of Mysore was, interfere at an earlier date? The only answer possible is, that too much reliance was placed on Sir Richard

Temple's reports. Almost extravagant terms of eulogy were used, while the minimum of investigation and enquiry was made by the Delegate, whose sole duty was minute investigation and close enquiry. Confidence on the part of the Government of India in the thorough trustworthiness of Sir Richard Temple's reports, combined with Mr. Saunders' weakness as a ruler and his inability to control his chief engineer, were the leading causes which contributed to the deplorable mismanagement which occurred in Mysore.

An important change in famine administration occurred before the Viceroy left Bangalore. His Excellency determined, in consultation with Sir A. Arbuthnot, to take into his own hands the administration of the Famine Department of the Government of India. This arrangement was proposed as the natural corollary of the changes which the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos had adopted in the Madras administration; but the proposal commended itself for various reasons to his Excellency's judgment. The paramount importance of famine administration at the present time had obliged the Viceroy to give to the details of it the closest and most constant personal supervision: it therefore seemed desirable on public grounds that he should openly and definitely acknowledge the responsibility he had virtually undertaken for the success or failure of the policy he had laid down, and was endeavouring to enforce, in the conduct of relief operations. The arrangement tended also to a speedier disposal of business and diminished the frequency of references. Sir A. Arbuthnot, on receiving the Viceroy's assent to the above-mentioned proposal, returned to Simla, where his presence was much needed, in consequence of the illness of Sir J. Strachey, who had, during Sir Alexander's absence, taken charge of the Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce.

Certain papers were placed in the Viceroy's hands on his arrival in Bangalore which justified the alarmist views which some were disposed to take. From these it appeared that the registered mortality in the province in 1874 was 51,230; in 1875 51,276; in 1876 54,265. The registered mortality from January 1 to May 31 in the current year was no less than 83,915. Of the above deaths 49,145 are put down to cholera, 3,012 to small-pox, 12,871 to fevers, 5,535 to bowel-complaints, and 13,352 to other causes. With the exception of cholera, the mortality under the above heads is not so much above the average of ordinary years as might have been expected. Thus, the five months' mortality from fever in 1877 was 12,871, against 23,934 for the whole of 1876. Again, the entry under small-pox for the first five months of 1877 is 3,012, against 445 in the same month of 1876 : under bowel-complaints 5,535, against 1,823 : and under other causes 13,352, against 4,911. It is under cholera where the large increase chiefly appears, 49,145 deaths being recorded in the five months ended May last, against 12,087 in the whole of 1876, and 3,139 in the whole of 1875.

With regard to the loss of cattle, the return furnished showed that while 163,255 (somewhat above the average) perished in 1875-6, the number increased to 462,240 in 1876-7. Of this number nearly a quarter of a million were bullocks, 78,000 were buffaloes, and 130,000 were sheep and goats. It is only necessary to remark that a pair of good Mysore bullocks are worth from 100 rs. to 150 rs.,[1] to form some idea of the loss of property which has fallen on many of the ryots.

Before leaving Southern India Lord Lytton paid a

[1] As, however, many of the best cattle were saved, and only the feeble died, the estimate given above is too high in estimating the loss all over the province.

visit to various places in the Madras Presidency, including the hill-country, making a short stay at the sanitarium, Ootacamund.[1] His Excellency proceeded thence to Mysore across country, and on his way took the opportunity of learning the condition of Coorg in relation to the famine-stricken immigrants from Mysore. The coffee-planters of Coorg, like those of Wynaad, are mainly dependent on Mysore for their labour supply, and, as in the Wynaad, multitudes of immigrants unable to find work, or unfit to work, were found in Coorg in a state of extreme destitution, and the mortality among them was very grievous indeed. A memorial purporting to come from the Planters' Association at Coorg was submitted to the Viceroy's private secretary for presentation: but it was not presented through the local authorities, and, in fact, had been refused by them. Lord Lytton declined to accept it formally as a memorial, but expressed his willingness to receive the two gentlemen (the Rev. A. Fennell and Mr. Hunt) who had come as a deputation to present it, and to hear all they had to urge. These two gentlemen accordingly waited on the Viceroy on September 18, the chief commissioner of Mysore and the superintendent of Coorg being present at the interview. They dwelt specially in the conversation that ensued on the great mortality among the wanderers from Mysore, a

[1] On this tour Lord Lytton's attention was attracted to a feature in Southern India mineralogy which may some day prove of great importance. In a despatch to the Secretary of State, his Excellency said:—'A large portion of the Madras territory through which I passed is largely auriferous; and I was informed by an experienced expert who has for two years been investigating its mineral resources, that neither in California nor Australia, all parts of which he had previously visited, do there exist gold deposits more capable of being remuneratively worked. This statement appears to me an important one; and I may perhaps take an early occasion of addressing to your Lordship a special communication on the subject of it. Meanwhile I may mention that silver is also found, as well as considerable quantities of small diamonds, in Wynaad.'

mortality which had, they asserted, been greatly underestimated by the local authorities; they complained that no relief works had been established, and said that the planters were, through want of means, unable to support the starving wanderers. Many of their assertions were traversed by the local officers, but it was clear that, as a matter of fact, neither relief works, nor hospitals, nor refuges, nor kitchens for the poor had been established in Coorg, and that there was urgent necessity for them. The Viceroy learnt that while roads were numerous in the province, a considerable portion of them require to be metalled, and that one or two good roads, the need of which was admitted, still remained to be made. Finally, his Excellency offered to grant either from Mysore or from imperial revenues, a sum of 50,000 rs. if the planters would consent to contribute one-third of that amount, either in money or supervision. Finding, however, that the two gentlemen forming the deputation had no authority to accept such an offer, and that they did not actually represent the whole body of planters, his Excellency undertook to depute Major Scott Moncrieff to visit Mercara, and to ascertain personally what the actual wishes of the planters were, and what might best be done with their co-operation in the way of starting relief works. Major Scott Moncrieff visited Mysore shortly after, and put matters on a satisfactory footing.

The Viceroy was greatly pleased to find, on returning to Bangalore, most satisfactory evidence of the beneficial results of the system of relief operations which he had established before leaving that town on September 9. These results were recorded in an interesting memorandum by Mr. Elliott, which showed that uniform rates of wage on relief works and rates of food ration in relief camps had been laid down; that orders

had been issued for closing superfluous and unsupervised open relief kitchens, the really necessitous recipients of relief being taken into well-supervised relief camps or poor-houses; that petty relief works under Civil officers were being wound up and closed; that in and around Bangalore town one relief kitchen had been closed, while from the other kitchens persons capable of labour were being drafted to relief works; that already 5,000 had been so drafted, and were doing good work on the railway bank instead of being fed in idleness at the kitchens; that the relief recipients who could not labour were being kept inside the camps and tended until they recovered, indoor being thus substituted for outdoor gratuitous relief; that relief employment of a kind suitable to destitute artisans and higher caste people was being arranged in Bangalore town; and that, partly in consequence of these measures and partly in consequence of the favourable change in the season, the number of inmates in the Bangalore kitchens had fallen from 30,733 to 13,301. Great care was taken by the officers in charge to treat with special leniency persons who went to the works in an enfeebled state of body.

The revolution in Mysore was now complete, and the administration of the province was practically in the hands of the triumvirate appointed by Lord Lytton, viz., Mr. C. A. Elliott, Major Scott Moncrieff, and Mr. A. Wingate. The difficulties they had to encounter were very great. Much irritation was, as might have been expected, caused at strangers being put in the high places of trust. Each of the officers, by their zeal, prudence, and patience, justified the Viceroy's selection. Particularly is this true of Mr. Elliott, whose position was peculiarly trying in many respects; but he bore himself *sans peur et sans reproche*. At much personal inconvenience, by scorning delights and living laborious

days, he made himself thoroughly master of the condition of Mysore in every district, and acquired in a few weeks such a knowledge of the province as, possessed a few months earlier by a chief commissioner resolutely determined to carry out a true famine policy, would have resulted in the salvation of many thousands —probably hundreds of thousands of lives. The Viceroy's visit to Southern India, successful as it was in all its phases, was in nothing more strikingly justified than in the appointments which were made in Mysore. It should not, however, be omitted to state that, in spite of the irritation alluded to, the officers of the Mysore commission and of the Public Works Department co-operated with the Famine Commissioner and the chief engineer with the utmost loyalty and heartiness, and that after a short time no feeling of petty jealousy was allowed to hinder the zealous introduction of the new policy.

Fortunately, with the new *régime* came rain, and prospects were more favourable. The relegation of the people to their homes was greatly aided by seasonal conditions, more particularly when British relief funds were sent to Bangalore, to the amount of 155,000*l.*, by the Madras famine committee. Mr. Elliott was most energetic in his endeavours to see that the money of the English people was poured into useful channels and made available to be of lasting benefit.

One of the first acts of importance which the Famine Commissioner undertook was the preparation of a famine code, containing detailed instructions for the administration of relief of all kinds. It was based on orders issued by the Viceroy at Bangalore on September 8, and may be briefly summarised here.

The backbone of the famine policy is the employment of all suitable applicants for relief on large works of permanent utility, superintended by professional officers of the Public Works Department. It is the duty of the Civil officer to decide who are suitable applicants, *i.e.*, who are sufficiently able-bodied for labour. In the present state of this province it is not intended, until a crop is harvested, that any applicant should be rejected on the ground of being too well-to-do, provided he submits to the three tests :—

(1) The distance test—which shows that he is willing to labour at a distance from his home, not returning there at night, but being hutted on the work.

(2) The wage test—*i.e.*, that he receives a wage calculated to provide a bare subsistence for himself, but not enough to support any non-working member of the family.

(3) The task-work test—*i.e.*, that he performs a daily task proportioned to his strength.

It is important to remember that, while it is desirable to secure the best return in work for the expenditure incurred, the main object of opening and carrying out a relief work is not for the sake of the work, but *for the sake of the labourers employed on the work.*

On every large public work there will, if possible, be placed a Civil officer to co-operate with and assist the Public Works officer, and a medical officer to take charge of the sick and those requiring special treatment. There will also be three classes of labourers.

Class I.—The moderately able-bodied, who can, on an average, perform 75 per cent. of the task usually accomplished by an ordinary cooly. Some members of this class will be fully able-bodied; some, though strong themselves, may have a sickly wife or child; some may be reduced by privation below their usual strength. But the class taken as a whole, counting the stronger with the weaker members, should be able to perform the 75 per cent. condition, and should receive the higher scale of wages.

Class II.—Those who are weakly, but are still able to work, and can on an average perform 50 per cent. of the ordinary task. This class will consist mainly of those who are old, infirm, partially disabled by some natural defect, or who are temporarily enfeebled by famine, but whom regular work and regular pay may be expected to restore. These should receive the lower scale of wages.

Class III.—Those who are too much emaciated to do any but a very light task, but who under special care may be expected to improve, and whose health and self-respect will be best consulted by

employing them in easy open-air work. These are called the class under special treatment. They will receive the higher scale of wage, in the hope of restoring their strength and fitting them to be drafted among the able-bodied, in addition to any extra nourishment the medical or relief officer may prescribe. Old and decrepit persons who cannot be expected to improve in strength are not to be included in this class.

The Civil officer will classify the applicants as they arrive according to these three classes, and will from time to time, as they improve or retrograde in strength, suggest their transfer from one class to another. The medical officer will see to the special treatment of all those who require extra food and nourishment, and for whom the ordinary wage is not sufficient. The Department of Public Works officer will receive the gangs and individuals made over to him, set them to work, register and number them, measure up the work they do, and see to their payment and their hutting. Accordingly the code treats in separate sections (1) of the duties of the professional officer of the Public Works Department, (2) of those of the Civil officer, (3) of those of the medical officer.

II. Civil relief works are supplementary to large Public Works Department relief works, and may be employed in three ways:—(1) as a safety valve for labour when there are more applicants than the Public Works Department can receive; (2) as a training school for Public Works Department work when it is desired to move bodies of men to considerable distances, and they are broken into this by being organised and accustomed to work together in gangs for a short time near their homes; (3) to give employment to the old and decrepit who do not come up to Class II., *i.e.*, cannot do half an ordinary day's work, and who will not be restored to strength by liberal treatment, and so must not be put in the special treatment class.

The petty relief works on which small bodies of 10 or 20 labourers have hitherto been employed, being paid by piece-work or by contract and under no real supervision, are to be discontinued. No work will be undertaken as a Civil relief work which will not afford employment for at least 300 people for one month. They will be hutted on the work, and not, except in the second case referred to above, allowed to go to their homes at night, and each work will be supervised by a responsible Civil officer. The second chapter of the code expounds the duties of the Civil officer with relation to Civil relief works.

III. The third main division of the scheme of famine policy is the relief camp. These camps are not to be used, as has generally

been the case hitherto, as dining places where people come for a meal or two meals a day and go away. Every person who receives relief at a relief camp must submit to two conditions:—(1) Residence in the camp; (2) Work. The camp must, therefore, be enclosed, and be provided with sufficient shed accommodation for its population. The able-bodied should not be received there, but sent at once to a work. The weakly applicant should also be generally sent to a relief work, but may sometimes be detained a few days to be fed up. The ordinary population should consist entirely of the old and infirm who are not likely to improve, and of the sick in hospital. For all these, except the sick, such work as they are capable of should be provided.

IV. The fourth main head of the code is special treatment. The Chief Commissioner's Proceedings, Famine Department, No. 5, dated September 11 (*vide* Appendix I.), prescribe the ordinary wages on Public Works Department and Civil relief works, and the ordinary ration in relief camps. But there are many cases in which the ordinary rates will not apply. Small and emaciated children, nursing mothers, who, either themselves or their babies, are suffering from innutrition, young and middle-aged adults of both sexes who have been temporarily brought down by starvation, women advanced in pregnancy, convalescents out of the hospitals; these form the chief classes of 'special cases' who require 'special treatment.' No part of the relief officer's duty (whether he be Public Works Department, Civil, or Medical) is more important than the selection of cases for special treatment, and the seeing that the orders he gives are carried out.

V. The fifth chapter in the code treats of village inspection and relief. This is especially the duty of the Civil officers of the district, and unless it is zealously and carefully performed it is impossible for them to find out the true condition of the people of their district, or to know if there are many people in the villages who need relief, but are too proud, or too frightened, or too resigned to their fate, to apply for it.

It may often happen that an officer may inspect a village once a week for three weeks running, turn out the inhabitants and find them all looking stout and comfortable, and on the fourth week may see that distress and emaciation have suddenly set in. Then he will act by sending the people on to relief works or into relief camps, and seeing that they go; but without this inspection he may be startled by suddenly finding a large influx of famine-stricken people who have come in too late to be saved.

Special relief for artisans who are unfitted for manual labour is provided by supplying them with the raw material of their trade, and for this purpose it is necessary to provide for the careful house-to-house inspection of all large towns.

Finally, every officer employed in connection with relief operations, of whatever rank, is held personally responsible that measures adequate to the distress are used, that unusual or impending distress is early brought to notice, that no question of form is allowed to impede relief, and that all orders are carried into execution.

Relief must never be allowed to run short so long as the relief is necessary; foresight must be exercised, and one work planned as fast as another draws near completion, or as fast as there are indications of an influx of labour. A list of works which are ready to be undertaken should be drawn up for each district, so as to be available whenever there is a fresh demand for work. No officer will be held excused for turning off gangs of labourers on the completion of a work, or for refusing *bonâ fide* applicants for labour, by the plea that he had not received a sanction.

The chief commissioner, after consultation with the famine commissioner and the chief engineer, is pleased, in supersession of all former orders, to lay down the following scale of rates of wages on relief works, and of rates of food in relief camps, for the guidance of all officers in the Mysore province.

A.—Rates of wages on Public Works Department Relief Works.

Adult male . .	Value of 1½ lb.	of grain	plus 9	pie for condiments.
„ female . .	„ 1 lb.	„	9	„
Child above 7 . .	„ ⅔ lb.	„	6	„
Child under 7 . .	„ ¼ lb.	„		

B.—Rates of wages on Civil Relief Works.

Adult male . .	Value of 1½ lb.	of grain	plus 3	pie for condiments.
„ female . .	„ 1 lb.	„	3	„
Child above 7 . .	„ ⅔ lb.	„	2	„
Child under 7 . .	„ ¼ lb.	„		

By grain is meant grain of medium quality, and of the description in ordinary use *at the time of payment*, among the labourers on the works. The price to be taken at the retail price of the grain ruling at the head-quarters of the taluk on the previous week.

C.—Rates of cooked food in relief camps for all persons except those who are in hospital or treated as special cases as being too infirm to labour, or as being children under seven years of age:—

Adult male or female .	1 lb.	of grain plus 3	pie worth of condiments.
Child over 7 years old .	½ lb.	2	„

N.B.—Ordinarily, ragi is to be taken as the staple grain. When ragi is not procurable, rice may be given. The same quantity is to be given in either case, whether of rice or ragi flour. The ration prescribed for food in relief camps is the quantity of raw ragi flour or rice which each person is to get; and the officer in charge of every camp will be held responsible for seeing that the ration distributed is the quantity which the one pound or the half pound will produce after baking or boiling, as the case may be.

The sliding scale of prices attached to this resolution shows the amount of money wage to be given, according to the varying prices of grain, on Public Works Department or Civil relief works. No wages will be given and no work exacted on any relief work on Sundays. The rate of wages laid down is intended to make provision for the Sunday's food.

VILLAGE INSPECTION.

I. The object of a system of frequently repeated house-to-house visitation in each village is to make sure that the measures taken by Government for the relief of the famine-stricken are effectual; that the tests enforced to prevent persons not in actual need of relief getting admittance to Government works or relief camps do not produce hardship; that none are allowed to die through neglect or ignorance of the means of help; and that any indications of distress among the general population are immediately brought to notice and checked. The organisation and efficiency of the village relief system will accordingly form the principal duty of all district officers, and their activity in this respect will be closely watched. They should be constantly on the move, and in their weekly progress reports give briefly the result of their experience. A similar system of house-to-house inspection should be adopted in all large towns.

II. In the first instance it will be the duty of the village officers to ascertain and register the distressed poor of their respective villages; their work will be checked and supervised by specially appointed inspectors, and the inspectors in their turn will be controlled by special relief officers under the deputy commissioner. Where necessary, village relief officers may be appointed, either instead of or to assist the special relief officer. The village relief officer should be a native gentleman of a superior stamp and of active habits, holding a permanent appointment under Government, a temporary substitute being employed in his place. Assistant commissioners may, in

addition to their own duties, be made special relief officers of the whole or part of their charge.

III. The deputy commissioner of each district will at once divide those taluks of his district which are severely distressed into circles containing about thirty villages each. Over each circle an inspector should be appointed, to be called the circle inspector, who should visit each village once a week, or at least once in ten days. To fill these posts of circle inspectors, only officers who hold permanent appointments may be selected. As a rule the more active and intelligent of the shekdars, and of the gumastas of the amildars or of deputy commissioners' courts should be appointed, or officials of that description, and temporary men on 10 rs. per mensem should fill their places. Ten per cent. of the circle inspector's work must be tested weekly by the special relief officer of the taluk, or, if there is none, by the village relief officer of the taluk. All Civil relief officers in charge of a taluk (whether deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners, or special relief officers) will enter in their weekly diaries the result of their own inspections and supervision.

District	No. of severely distressed taluks
Bangalore	9
Kolar	10
Tumkur	8
Chitaldroog	8
Shimoga	2
Kadur	3
Hassan	7
Mysore	2

IV. Every village officer (patel and shanbhog) should be again warned that he will be held strictly responsible that his village is free from persons in severe distress. The patel, assisted by the shanbhog, of each village, must keep up a register, as under, of those whom the circle inspector selects as requiring relief in the village.

In this register no one must be entered who is capable of doing any kind of labour on a relief work or in a relief camp; only the bedridden, the cripples, the very infirm, blind, and such cases should be on this register, which entitles these to receive relief at their home, and then only provided that they have no other means of support and no able-bodied relatives in a position to assist them. To such, one lb. of raw grain may be given daily to an adult; half a lb. to a child above twelve; and one-quarter to a young child. The food should usually be given in the presence of the circle inspector, the village officers, and two respectable inhabitants, and the quantity given on

each occasion should therefore be sufficient to last the recipients till the next visit of the inspector. A separate register for such persons should be kept by the shanbhog in a special form, and each entry in this should be signed by the parties witnessing the distribution. To meet this small expenditure, a petty advance of money not exceeding a month's salary may be allowed the circle inspector. The superior relief officers, on visiting a village, will invariably examine the people registered and sign the registers.

V. The village patel, with the help of the shanbhog, should also compile a list of those very poor persons who are able to leave the village, but who have not done so. To people on this list, food will not be allowed in the village, but the circle inspector will give them a ticket to present to the place fixed for applicants at the taluk head-quarter relief camp, whence they will be sent either to a relief work or to a relief camp. The circle inspector must not allow them to remain in the village. If it is a day's journey to the taluk head-quarters, the circle inspector will give them either grain or money to buy one day's food, entering the disbursement in column 6 of another register, and procuring the signatures of two witnesses to the transaction. Ordinary able-bodied labourers will not be entered in this list, which is intended to show that the village officer is aware of any cases of special poverty in his village. At every succeeding inspection the circle inspector will enquire whether any of the people entered on this list who were sent away have returned, and whether there are many others in the village who ought to be entered on it and sent to a relief work or relief camp accordingly.

VI. The death of any person on Register (A) must be reported by the circle inspector to the special relief officer, who will enter the total number in his weekly report.

VII. The first duty of the circle inspector or of an inspecting officer visiting a village is to go carefully through the village house by house, the inspection being made more searching in the poorer quarters and among the lower and Pariah castes. Cases of people of good position in ascertained distress, such as of pardah or high caste women, and any suffering among particular classes, should be specially reported upon to the special relief officer of the taluk. The able-bodied asking for assistance or who appear in need of relief, should be directed to the public works and sent with a letter to the head-quarters of the taluk for an order admitting to the works. The results of the inspection should be compared with the Registers (A) (B) and (C,) and if necessary the registers should be corrected by

striking off names improperly entered, or adding those omitted. The inspector lastly should satisfy himself that all on Register (A) really in need of relief get relief, and that none on Register (C) are allowed to return and starve quietly in the village.

VIII. Professional beggars well able to earn their living, religious mendicants, and the like, are not to be relieved; nor are people able to help themselves to be needlessly interfered with.

IX. If, when travelling, a pauper or distressed wanderer is met, the circle inspector will take him to the nearest village or have him carried there. Wanderers so brought, or arriving in any other way, will be fed once by the village officer in the presence of two respectable villagers, and then forwarded to the nearest camp under proper escort with a report, signed also by the two villagers, giving the circumstances of the case.

X. The circle inspector must keep up two statements of expenditure, the one corresponding to Register (A), and showing the number relieved in grain in each village, and in accordance with this statement he will be enabled to draw weekly on the amildar's treasury for the weekly value of grain to be distributed: the other showing particulars of casual expenditure, advances to paupers on Register (C), to wanderers, &c.

XI. To provide for wanderers, deputy commissioners are authorised to deposit a sum not exceeding 5 rs. with the village officers of any village where circumstances call for the grant. As the money is spent, bills should be drawn on the amildar, after two respectable inhabitants have countersigned the vouchers.

When famine administration comes to be systematised, which may be expected to be one result of the labours of the famine commission, the provisions in Mr. Elliott's famine code will find a leading place in the system. The Viceroy's Council was particularly pleased with it. 'In our secretary's letter acknowledging the code,' say the members of Council, 'we expressed our special satisfaction with the clauses which carefully provide for the humane treatment of those who are unable to do a full day's work, or who are in need of medical care and special food.'[1]

The state of things which the Viceroy proceeded to

[1] Despatch from Viceregal Council to Secretary of State.

Mysore to remedy was not easily altered. Up to the end of October, deaths, mainly due to famine, still occurred in and near Bangalore, whither (as has already been stated) had congregated tens of thousands, for whom adequate relief was not available in their villages. The poor creatures who thus wandered in search of charity, grew weaker and weaker, and at last died during the cold rainy nights, mostly came from the distressed tracts in the centre and north of the province, and they were said often to pass by relief works and relief houses, where they could at once have obtained relief. A special organisation was arranged for finding these wanderers before they were past recovery, and taking them forcibly into relief hospitals and relief camps. The reported famine deaths in and round the town and cantonment of Bangalore were:—

During	August	. . . . .	20 per day.
„	September	1 to 10	41 „
„	„	11 to 30	35 „
„	October	1 to 13	26 „
„	„	14 to 17	23 „
„	„	18 to 20	16 „

The deaths in relief camps and relief hospitals were:—

During	August	. . . . .	84 per day.
„	September	1 to 13	95 „
„	„	11 to 30	70 „
„	October	1 to 13	55 „

The numbers fed in the relief camps in and around Bangalore from August 1 up to September 10 were about 36,000, of whom barely one-sixth were permanent inmates of the camps. From September 11 to October 30 the average number of persons relieved at the camps was about 20,000, of whom from one-half to three-quarters were permanent inmates. The good done by the changes in the relief system, and by the improvement in the season, is apparent from the reduced mor-

tality in Bangalore town and cantonments generally. The number of deaths, exclusive of reported famine deaths and of the deaths in relief hospitals, is returned at:—

In Bangalore town and cantonment. { 884 for the month of July. / 1,185 „ August. / 225 „ September.

The Famine Commissioner in the course of his tours found that the mortality from famine in the Tumkur district and other parts of central Mysore had been very large. The changes in the numbers in receipt of relief in six weeks were as follows:—

During the week ending	On relief works	On gratuitous relief
September 15	53,745	208,683
„ 22	56,551	161,892
„ 29	58,693	126,204
October 6	62,506	103,750
„ 13	73,202	88,757
„ 20	78,478	72,838

The numbers on relief works forming a much larger proportion of the total numbers in receipt of relief was a satisfactory indication of the thoroughness of the change. The reports for the period state that 'the paupers gain much in health and spirits within a few days of their being drafted from gratuitous relief at camps or kitchens to relief works.'

Amongst other institutions improved by Mr. Elliott were the feeding kitchens, particularly those in Bangalore, which had proved the source of much demoralisation. The voluntary committees were disbanded with a letter from the Viceroy to Mr. J. D. Gordon, C.S.I., president of the central committee, in which his disinterested services and those of the members of committee were cordially acknowledged. All relief kitchens were placed under official control, and the members of the

late central committee were requested to take charge of specified districts of the town of Bangalore.[1] The central committee, however, was reorganised, and was made the medium for the distribution of the British contributions. Upon this committee Mr. Elliott and several other members of the administration sat. The

[1] Among the rules issued for the guidance of these beat inspectors were the following:—

'5. The inspectors of beats will be expected to visit their beats weekly, and the tickets for grain must be renewed every week by them, or the grain-merchant will not be authorised to serve out the grain to the ticket-holders.

'6. To those persons who belong to some trade and are unable through poverty to carry on their trade, the means of doing so should be given; cotton should be supplied for women to spin, yarn or wool for weavers to weave, leather for shoemakers, and so on, exacting from each of them the return of a due quantity of the manufactured article at the end of the week, which Government will buy from them at a fixed remunerative price. It seems best that this, which is a technical and difficult task, should be performed by a special official, to be called the distributor of work; one such official will probably be sufficient for the pettah and one for the cantonment. The inspectors of beats will send to the distributor of work, every Monday, all persons belonging to the classes above described who are not accustomed to manual labour; giving to each a slip showing number of beat, number of house on inspector's register, and name of ticket-holder; but care must be taken to discriminate; the weavers, for instance, who have been working on the Sampangi tank have now become good labourers and should not be sent to loom work again, which is much more difficult to supervise. If a volunteer can be procured for this office, so much the better; if not, a paid official may be appointed. It is impossible to specify beforehand what the details of the transaction which the distributor of work will have to supervise should be; what quantity should be exacted of any kind of work; at what price it should be paid for; or how Government should dispose of it. Experience will soon provide a set of rules on these points; and, in all probability, the Charitable Committee will be able to take the cloth woven or the shoes made, &c., off your hands and to distribute them to orphans and to other fit objects of charity.

'7. The chief commissioner confidently hopes that every member of the municipal committee will be willing to take a beat, and to carry out this house-to-house inspection. In case there should be more beats than committee members, you should enlist the services of volunteers, applying first to the members of the Charitable Relief Committee to see if any of them are ready to assist you, and afterwards to native gentlemen of good repute in the city. When your arrangements are complete, you are requested to report the number of beats and the names of the inspectors of each. Your own duties should be confined to testing a percentage (not less than 5 per cent.) of the houses in each beat, to see that the work of visiting is thoroughly done and the aid given is given with judgment and discrimination.'

house relief in Bangalore was not so well managed as might have been hoped. This appears in the following minute, which may be quoted in full because of the manner in which it shows at once the scope for and the difficulty in arranging private charity. Mr. Elliott says:—

'No returns have yet been received from Dr. Orr, showing the quantity and cost of this relief: this delay is very inconvenient and ought to have been obviated, especially when he saw how large an expenditure was being incurred, and how important it was that I should be satisfied of the propriety of that expenditure. There are in the town twenty beats and twenty inspectors; I don't know what the total figures are, but I found in one beat more than 1,000 lbs. of grain are given in the week. If the others are at all similar, we have a weekly expenditure of 20,000 lbs. of grain, or say about 5,000 rs. a month.

'I visited the beats of two inspectors, and am satisfied that they have done their work carefully and laboriously, and with considerable knowledge of the circumstances of each case. But they have not been very judicious in their gifts, and have not understood the limitations which are necessarily imposed on gratuitous relief. These limitations are that the recipient should be in severe distress, almost amounting to starvation—and that he should bear the marks of emaciation on his person—in fact that he should be such a person as would properly be received and fed in a relief camp if he applied there, and would not be sent away to work or rejected as unfit. Now of the people I visited to-day in their houses, and of those whom I saw collected before the grain-dealers' shops, certainly nine out of ten had not suffered from innutrition and were not fit cases for gratuitous relief. No doubt most of them were suffering from a certain degree of distress, though in some cases it would have been hard to guess this when noticing the plumpness of the children; but if Government undertook to relieve every case of distress, it would be involved in an enormous expenditure which no treasury could stand. It is here that Dr. Orr has failed both to draw the line judiciously and to carry out the instructions contained in paragraph 4 of the letter of September 26, which distinctly confines grain-relief to those who are old, infirm, and unable to work.

'Nothing has yet been spent out of the charitable relief money given to Dr. Orr for use in the municipality, and this though during my inspection I observed numerous instances in which it would have

been of immense benefit. I noted down case after case of weavers who had sold their looms (or had them sold by the harsh proceedings of the municipality), or who had no thread to weave, or no sale for the woven cloth; and of the embroidery-makers who had little or no sale for their tinsel thread, who were being relieved by a dole of grain at Government expense. Whereas it would have been far wiser and better, and more conducive to their self-respect and to the good of society, to buy them looms, or give them thread, or take over their produce at a price, and so encourage their trade and their power of supporting themselves.

'This might have been done with Government money, under the orders contained in the letter of September 26; but there are some difficulties in the way of working those orders which it is well to avoid if possible. The cloths usually woven by most of the distressed weavers, and for which their looms are specially constructed, are finer than those which we want for our hospitals and paupers; and if we receive these, we have to establish an organisation for selling them again, which is laborious and costly. On the other hand, if we cease to make recoverable advances of thread and materials and only give grants out of the charitable fund to start the artisans, at the same time making known that we are ready to take an almost unlimited number of coarse men's cloths and women's saris at a given price, we should do more to stimulate trade and do it in a manner more convenient and suitable to Government.

'Besides this, the distinction to be drawn between the fit recipients of Government and of charitable relief though clear in theory is fine in practice. Government should help those absolutely unable to support themselves; charitable relief reaches those whose earnings are scanty and require to be supplemented. It is difficult to keep this distinction constantly before oneself, and the great majority of the persons to be relieved come under the latter class, as having the means of labour or the implements of trade, but being unable to earn more than a pinched and insufficient livelihood thereby. On these grounds it seems better to transfer the whole provision for this class of distress to the charitable Relief committee.

'With the chief commissioner's sanction, therefore, I issue the following rules:—

'I. The Government grain dole must be strictly confined to those who are destitute, old, infirm and unable to labour, and who have no relatives able to support them. In order to carry this order out strictly, Lieutenant Anderson in the city, and Captain Healy in the cantonment, are desired personally to inspect every case now borne on the lists of inspectors of beats, and to reject all those who do not

come within the definition of proper recipients. Of those that do fulfil the conditions, he should have new lists prepared, beat by beat, and new tickets given for grain. The grain should be given out once at the beginning of the week, not day by day, and the distribution should be witnessed by the inspector of the beat. The president of the municipality is relieved of the functions allotted to him under the letter of September 26, and they are entrusted to Lieutenant Anderson and Captain Healy, who will report direct to the Additional Secretary.

'II. The relief of those rejected by Lieutenant Anderson (most of whom are probably in distress, though not severe distress) and of artisans is entrusted to the Charitable Relief Committee, who will no doubt see that there is no further delay in distributing help to those who deserve and need it, and that proper machinery is set going to carry out their wishes.

'I would suggest that the grain tickets given from charitable funds should be printed on red paper, to be easily distinguished from those given from Government funds. The inspectors of beats will, I trust, not object to carry on the double functions indicated, acting both for Government and for the relief committee. All that is necessary is that when they see a case of distress they should ask themselves, is this person in severe distress, and in danger of starvation if not relieved? Then he should get a ticket for Government grain. Is he only in slight distress, not altogether without money but requiring his earnings to be supplemented? Then he should be helped out of the English charitable funds. With the former we cannot be too economical, with the latter funds we are bound so to deal as to secure that they are spent, and spent liberally.'

To an administrator a perusal of the Famine Commissioner's various minutes and recommendations would be of the utmost interest and value, but they cannot be inserted in this place. They show a thorough command of the crisis, and an acquaintance with *minutiæ* of all parts of the province which, backed by the requisite energy—not wanting in this case—could result in nothing but complete control. This Mr. Elliott evidently possessed. On November 16 events had so greatly improved—'the improvement in the general

appearance and condition of the country is amazing'—that Mr. Elliott began to doubt whether, after the end of December, there would be any work for the special relief officers to do. Distress, it was clear, would linger some time longer in Bangalore, Tumkur, and parts of Chittaldrug. In November the Famine Commissioner believed there was no village in which field employment could not be had, or food sufficient to maintain life could not be procured, by collecting herbs and roots, &c. The temper of the people, too, was changed: they were hopeful, and not despondent, and did not as a rule willingly leave their villages. No compulsion of any kind was therefore from that time to be used. 'Relief tickets should be offered to any that appear thin and distressed, but no further pressure should be employed.' These were the circumstances under which the charitable relief from England could be turned to best account. The special relief officers were directed to enquire into the case of each labourer, and see how far the charitable relief fund would go in supporting them. To those who were cultivators, and had land and crops, the officer could give as much money as was needed for their sustenance till their crops were ripe; if their land was waste and they had no means of cultivating it, he could give them money for bullocks, seed grain, and food till the next crop came. To those who were weavers he could give money to repurchase looms if their looms were sold, to buy thread, and to start again in their profession. The manner in which relief was dispensed in Mysore will be found described in the section of this work relating to private charity.

As time passed on, and the crops were reaped, the Famine Commissioner found that he had mistaken the signs of the times when, in November, he anticipated distress would pass away with the year. A passage

from one of Mr. Wingate's statements, published in January, is as follows: 'The reports which have been received during the past week show that the out-turn of the crops which have been harvested, or are in process of being harvested, has not been equal to the expectations which were formed from the appearance of the fields earlier in the season. In North Kolar, where the Famine Commissioner had been lately on tour, the dry crops have been almost a total failure; in East Kolar the return has not exceeded one-third of an average yield from the area sown; while in the Bangalore district, excepting the south-west portion, where prospects are fairly good, the estimate is only one-fourth. The area cultivated is also a good deal below the average. For the Tumkur and Chittaldrug districts an estimate cannot yet be framed with so much certainty, but the accounts received warrant the conclusion that there too a serious deficiency may be expected. The irrigated area, which is larger than usual this year, will do something to supplement deficiencies, but its total produce is not a large factor in the calculation. Under these circumstances the Famine Commissioner has considered it necessary to call for statistical returns from each taluk, showing the area and estimated or ascertained yield of the present harvest, and to ask the opinion of the district officers regarding the sufficiency of the food-supply, and the probability of distress or famine having again to be met. As a precautionary measure, pending replies to these enquiries, the chief engineer is considering a scheme of public works which can be immediately opened in case relief be required. Were this an ordinary year, probably the circumstances of the season are such as could be dealt with by a liberal treatment of the revenue demand, and an extension of the ordinary public works; but preceded as this year

has been by a period of severe famine, the partial loss of the early harvest calls for the utmost watchfulness, since the strain the province has passed through makes it hardly possible that people so recently dependent upon Government for the means of livelihood will be able to live under prolonged high prices without that aid.

'The unfavourable turn in prices, noticed in last report, has become more marked and general this week. Rice has fallen, taking the province generally, by about half a seer, and raggi by rather more, and there is no country raggi in the market. The imports by rail again increased, and amounted to 1,743 tons, or 161 tons more than in the preceding week. The quantity exported by the octroi returns was 690 tons, or the same as last week, the largest export being to the Tumkur district.'

This reaction was grappled with bravely, precautions were taken, and in April the enemy was fairly conquered. Somewhat alarmed at the reaction in January, the Government of India, on the 30th of that month, asked for detailed statements from all the taluks in the province. This, after almost infinite trouble, was obtained. A memorandum, covering fifty pages of printed foolscap, contained an estimate of the yield of crops, and on that a further estimate as to the cost of closing relief operations was based. Much information regarding the position of the country was contained in the memorandum, the closing paragraphs of which were as follows:—

'We see then that there is food enough and to spare in the whole tract treated of in this note, and in each district taken by itself, except Bangalore, although there are several taluks which either fall below the minimum or come perilously near to it. On the whole the Bangalore district has had the poorest crop of all. I have not included the two taluks (Closepet and Kankanhalli) which are admittedly free from famine and have had fully average crops: and in two of the taluks which I have included I have marked the figures as untrust-

worthy and too low. But every taluk except Bangalore itself is very poorly off. In Kolar and Tumkur the returns are encouraging, and I think they fairly represent the truth. The same may be said of Hassan also. In Chitaldrug the area figures are altogether deceptive, except in the Budihal taluk, where special pains were taken by the relief officer, Lieutenant Macintire, to make them accurate. But on the whole I am satisfied that there is no lack of food in that district, though portions of Paugarh, Hiriyur, and Hosdrug are distressed.

'One of the chief lessons which these figures teach is the immense importance of irrigation in a year like this. The irrigated area, in the taluks specified above, is returned as 238,694 acres out of 1,950,433, or 12 per cent., but the produce of the irrigated area is estimated at 1,002,105 khandis against 1,374,935 khandis produced by the dry land. But for the wet land there are only eight taluks which produce food enough for their people. If we are saved this year from the horrors of famine it will be entirely due to the blessings of irrigation and to the storage of water in tanks.

'It only needs a glance at the statement to show how infinitely worse the position was this time last year. The population was then considerably larger. The dry crop which I have now estimated at 3, 4, and 6 annas was then reckoned at scarcely 2 annas in these taluks; and the wet crops did not exist. Instead of a population of 1,755,100 with 2,377,040 khandis to feed them, we had then in the same taluks a larger population with only about 600,000 khandis of food on the ground. The wonder is not that the famine was so severe, but that any survived.

'At any rate we are free from any such prospect at present, and it may be admitted that these figures give a less gloomy impression of the prospects of the year than some officers have been inclined to entertain. They bear out and fortify my impression that there is food enough in the country if only it can get itself distributed; that the ryots are mostly safe, and the people likely to need relief are only the poorer labouring classes for whom it is necessary to provide labour. This is being done by Government, and there seems reason to hope that a liberal system of relief works will be sufficient to meet all or most of the distress in the country till the next rainy season arrives.'

The chief commissioner adopted the estimates as regards works, &c., prepared by Mr. Elliott. The chief engineer concurred generally in the estimate, but considered that if anything it erred on the side of excess. It was as follows:—

Increase up to April 1	5,000
„ May 1	10,000
„ June 1	4,000
Total number on April 1	56,000
„ May 1	66,000
„ June 1	70,000

'After the beginning of June, supposing the rains to fall normally, there will probably be a great exodus of the able-bodied; such of them as continue on the works can be treated on ordinary departmental rules, and not under the famine code, and there will only remain on the hands of Government a residuum of weakly people, say about 2,000 or 3,000 in number, who will have still to be provided for till they are fit for ordinary labour, or till prices fall. The calculation of cost should therefore be that Government will have to pay:—

			Rs.
During April	61,000	at 3 rupees	1,83,000
„ May	68,000	„	2,04,000
„ June	35,000	„	1,05,000
„ July—October	8,000	„	24,000
	Total cost of works		5,16,000

The average cost of labourers on civil works is 10 as., and on Public Works Department works 12 as. a week, so that 3 rs. per month may be taken as the general rate of expenditure.

'The numbers entertained in relief camps are now only 3,000, and there is no reason for expecting any increase, but rather the contrary. They are almost all hospital patients, their number is slowly diminishing, and no new relief camps are likely to be opened. Assuming, however, that the number remains unchanged till the end of June, the cost for four months at 5 rs. per head per month will amount to 60,000 rs.

'The order to place on village relief all who are cripples, blind, bedridden, helpless, or sick, is now being carried into effect, but the returns come in slowly,

and the actual numbers thus relieved are not yet known. But looking at those taluks where the system is best established, the Famine Commissioner is inclined to estimate the number who ought to be receiving the grain dole at about 20,000, or nearly 1 per cent. of the population of the affected taluks. This number should decrease slowly by deaths and removals till the list is closed, say at the end of October, when new crops begin to come in. An adult receives 15 seers a month, or about 2 rs. worth of food; a child half of that; but allowing a little margin, we may reckon the cost at 2 rs. per head for 20,000 people for seven months, or 2,80,000 rs.

'The pay of the superior officers in the Famine Department, including those in the Public Works Department, may be roughly put at 60,000 rs. a month. For the three months from April 1 to the end of June the cost will be 1,80,000 rs., and by that time it is probable that most of the officers will be relieved from this duty. The total expenditure, then, which, by the above estimates, is likely to be incurred in the Famine Department up to the time when it is hoped that, if all goes well, the famine may be considered at an end, is as follows:—

	Rs.
Relief works	5,16,000
Relief camps	60,000
Village relief	2,80,000
Establishment	1,80,000
Total	10,36,000'

At the end of April, Mr. Elliott was relieved of his duties as Famine Commissioner, Major Scott-Moncrieff undertaking them in addition to his own. These officers were made Companions of the Star of India on May 24, 1878.

The mortality in Mysore was appalling, reaching the terrible total of 1,250,000—one-fourth of the population of the province.

A better idea of the course of the famine before and after the new *régime* cannot be given than in the following tables:—

The Old Régime.

Week	No. of persons employed		No. gratuitously relieved	Total
	Under professional agency	Under civil agency		
Fortnight ending Jan. 31, 1877		28,684	Information not available	Information not available
Week ending Feb. 17, 1877	28,788	34,560		
„ „ 24 „		41,110		
„ Mar. 3 „	30,794	33,513	23,295	87,602
„ „ 10 „	30,794	36,600	37,361	104,755
„ „ 17 „	31,052	38,512	46,861	116,425
„ „ 24 „	31,052	44,365	52,471	127,888
„ „ 31 „	31,715	55,687	57,974	145,376
„ Apr. 7 „	31,715	32,047	59,444	123,206
„ „ 14 „	30,542	29,159	68,641	128,342
„ „ 21 „	30,542	27,686	82,501	140,729
„ „ 28 „	33,183	30,070	87,691	150,944
„ May 5 „	30,159	32,352	94,873	157,384
„ „ 12 „	34,222	32,281	102,399	168,902
„ „ 19 „	34,466	29,933	108,482	172,881
„ „ 26 „	31,152	25,479	107,814	164,445
„ June 2 „	29,629	28,848	108,557	167,034
„ „ 9 „	28,236	29,289	114,676	172,201
„ „ 16 „	26,264	30,517	110,805	167,586
„ „ 23 „	25,632	26,158	116,259	168,049
„ „ 30 „	24,275	25,519	120,251	170,045
„ July 7 „	22,288	25,003	126,011	173,302
„ „ 14 „	21,339	26,270	137,560	185,169
„ „ 21 „	20,045	28,153	151,436	199,634
„ „ 28 „	19,339	25,875	164,439	209,653
„ Aug. 4 „	21,249	24,327	174,842	220,418
„ „ 11 „	21,935	24,296	187,175	233,406
„ „ 18 „	22,855	26,345	194,083	243,283
„ „ 25 „	22,975	25,644	213,710	262,329
„ Sept. 1 „	24,206	29,295	227,067	280,568

The New Régime.

Week	No. of persons employed		No. gratuitously relieved	Total
	Under professional agency	Under civil agency		
Week ending Sept. 8, 1877	24,847	28,754	221,176	274,777
„ „ 15 „	24,042	28,803	208,683	262,428
„ „ 22 „	25,271	31,280	161,892	218,443
„ „ 29 „	27,655	31,038	126,204	184,897
„ Oct. 6 „	35,497	27,009	103,750	166,256
„ „ 13 „	39,741	32,461	88,757	160,959
„ „ 20 „	48,213	30,275	73,838	152,326
„ „ 27 „	52,274	31,167	61,148	144,589
„ Nov. 3 „	43,870	33,335	51,328	128,533
„ „ 10 „	46,953	34,209	42,331	123,493
„ „ 17 „	50,080	29,940	31,370	111,390
„ „ 24 „	48,191	24,896	21,458	94,545
„ Dec. 1 „	44,970	21,307	19,480	85,757
„ „ 8 „	46,076	17,478	18,371	81,925
„ „ 15 „	45,163	13,803	15,493	74,459
„ „ 22 „	45,286	5,357	13,223	63,866
„ „ 29 „	43,010	5,426	14,943	63,379
„ Jan. 5, 1878	44,427	5,069	9,750	59,246
„ „ 12 „	42,070	4,409	7,558	54,037
„ „ 19 „	38,050	4,147	6,408	48,605
„ „ 26 „	37,961	4,664	4,128	46,753
„ Feb. 2 „	40,204	4,025	3,775	48,004
„ „ 9 „	41,657	4,546	3,648	49,851
„ „ 16 „	42,210	4,758	3,585	50,553
„ „ 23 „	43,623	6,317	3,809	53,749
„ Mar. 2 „	41,984	8,818	3,721	54,523
„ „ 9 „	45,160	9,724	3,532	58,416
„ „ 16 „	46,884	10,875	5,086	62,845
„ „ 23 „	46,112	10,672	6,931	63,715
„ „ 30 „	46,205	12,286	7,820	66,311
„ Apr. 6 „	42,680	12,429	9,713	64,822
„ „ 13 „	45,963	11,513	10,167	67,643
„ „ 20 „	41,567	10,455	10,437	62,459

DISTRESS IN NORTHERN INDIA

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NEVER perhaps was there a time in recent Indian history when so much cause for anxiety existed as in August 1877. Famine was master in Southern India, and was threatening to be master in Northern India also. Lord Lytton's journey from Simla to Madras was through a region almost entirely famine-stricken.

Leaving Simla on August 16, his Excellency met at Amballa the Commissioner of that division of the Punjab, who gave a very bad account of the prospects of the autumn crop. Over great tracts of the dry loose soil of the Cis-Sutlej country there had been no appreciable rainfall since early in July; a great part (the proportion could not be exactly stated) of the land prepared for autumn crops had not been sown; and much of what had been sown had withered. But there were still some weeks to the time for sowing the spring crops, which yield the great food-harvests; and should rain fall within that period, these crops would be sown over a larger area than usual. Water in the irrigation wells was not failing; though the hot dry winds scorched the crops, and made irrigation less efficacious than in ordinary years. The appearance of the land round Amballa was, for the season of the year, extremely dry and arid.

On the morning of the 18th Lord Lytton met the

collectors of Agra and Allyghur in the North-west Provinces. Prospects in the Agra district were then as bad as in any part of the North-west Provinces, and they were said to be less hopeful than in the Amballa division. In the Allyghur district there was more well irrigation, and more canal irrigation; so that a considerable autumn food-crop would be secured. In both districts there seemed to be already some fear about fodder for the cattle. In Allyghur, with its many canal channels, this difficulty would probably be not so great. But in the Agra district, if rain held off, there must be great loss of cattle. The river Jumna there flows between high banks, unclad by verdure, and differs in this respect from the Ganges, which annually floods a broad belt of low ground beside its bed.

At the Agra junction station, his Highness the Maharaja of Jeypore, with some of the chief officials, saw the Viceroy. The Maharaja was most laudably anxious about the prospects of his territory; and he placed in his Excellency's hand a memorandum describing some of the measures he proposed to take for the prevention, or relief, of anticipated distress. The position in Jeypore was, in brief, that crops had failed to a large extent, that the grass was withering, and that already dearth was beginning to be felt.

Simultaneously with this memorandum, a letter was received from Mr. Lyall, the Governor General's agent, stating that the whole of Rajputana, north-west of the Aravelli mountains, was threatened with serious scarcity; that the crops were widely damaged, grass withering, and pasturage already insufficient. In a subsequent letter Mr. Lyall stated that he had reason to believe there were large stocks of grain on hand, and that the people were hopeful. Opportunity was taken, when answering these papers, to explain at some length

to the agent the famine policy which should be inculcated on the Maharaja of Jeypore, as well as on the Governments of other native States similarly situated.

At Allahabad the local officers reported, that though some of the autumn crops had suffered much from drought, yet prospects in the Allahabad and Benares divisions were not nearly so gloomy as in the northern commissionerships. It was said that in all parts of the Punjab and the North-west Provinces, grain stocks in the hands of dealers, zemindars, and substantial ryots were unusually large; and that prices had not yet grown so dear as might have been expected.

On August 19 his Excellency met at Jubbulpore the chief commissioner of the Central Provinces, who was able to give a good account of the agricultural prospect throughout those provinces. He drew attention to the very large, and still increasing, stocks of grain and seeds awaiting despatch from Nagpore, Jubbulpore, and other stations on the Great Indian Peninsular Railway; most of the grain, he explained, was consigned to the famine districts.

For some months distress continued, but on October 11, in a despatch to the Secretary of State, the Viceroy was enabled to report as follows:—

'The break in the rains had continued so long in the Central Provinces, that the position of the rice crop was critical; in some places part of the rice crop had actually withered. The millet and pulse crops were still in good condition, but rain was wanted for the spring crop sowings. Rain has now fallen in sufficient quantity at Nagpore, Hingunghat, and Saugor; and the chief commissioner reports that, if this rain is general, the prospects of the autumn crop will be everywhere improved. As Chutteesgurh and other districts of the Central Provinces are off the telegraph line, we are

unable to write with certainty about those tracts. Into the northern districts of the Central Provinces there came daily, during the last ten days of September, thousands of immigrants from the drought-stricken native states and British districts lying in the basin of the river Chumbul. The number of these immigrants is now about 40,000, and for them the chief commissioner has provided relief employment on the road leading from the Jhansi border through Saugor and Damoh to Jubbulpore. We have agreed that the Government of India shall meet one-half the expenditure on this relief work up to March 30, as most of the labourers will be immigrants; the remainder of the cost will be met from the ordinary provincial resources.

'Up to October 5 the drought and consequent distress had gone on increasing in Northern and Eastern Rajputana, and in most of the eastern states under the Indore agency. The price of wheat was 14 lbs. per rupee at Gwalior and 17 lbs. at Ajmeer; pasture for cattle had everywhere failed; tens of thousands of people were pouring through Neemuch, through Goona, through Jhansi, down into Malwa, where the condition of the crops was becoming critical. Most of these emigrants were from native states, but some came from British districts on the right bank of the Jumna. Among some of these poor people, on the great road between Seepree and Goona, cholera broke out. Relief houses were opened at Goona and other places on this road. But from all sides it was reported that severe famine would be felt all over the basin of the Chumbul river, if rain did not come down. There was then (end of September) little hope of rain; and by way of providing relief employment for the immigrant poor, we sanctioned the immediate commencement of earthwork and ballast collection on the railway lines from Ajmeer

through Beawur to Dasori on the north, and on the line from Neemuch to Rutlam in the centre, of the threatened tract. In the east, work on the Gwalior and Agra Railway had previously been opened. Telegrams of the last three days have informed us of seasonable rain all over Central India and Rajputana, from Gwalior on the east to Mullanee and Palee on the west, and from Indore on the south up to Jeypore on the north. We have not yet had tidings from the Bikaneer and Jeysulmeer deserts. But it appears certain that the rain which has fallen, and which was continuing up to the 8th current, will provide pasture everywhere, and in many places will suffice for the spring crop sowings. If this favourable change continues, the danger of actual famine will have passed away; though scarcity and high prices must continue until the spring crop is secure. We shall not be able to counter-order the commencement of the railway relief works in these countries until prospects are more assured.

'In previous letters and telegrams we have informed your Lordship that the unirrigated autumn crops have been lost over the greater part of the North-west Provinces and Oudh, and that the failure of crop had been most marked in the Rohilkund and Agra divisions. Until October 5 rain held off; fodder for cattle was not to be had; there seemed no hope of more rain; and it was certain that, unless plentiful rain fell within the month of October, the spring crop would be lost, and severe widespread famine would be inevitable. Happily there were a large number of large useful public works, new canals, extensions and rectifications of old canals, drainage channels, railway extensions, and railway projects, most of which were ready for commencement, and on which very large numbers of people could be usefully employed. The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-west

Provinces had sent his chief engineer round all the threatened districts, with a view to settling with the local officers a scheme for relief works. Some such works had already been begun; and we had ordered a contingent of engineer officers from other provinces to aid in completing the preparations for a system of provincial light railways which the Lieutenant-Governor, in concert with our colleague, Sir John Strachey, who had visited Naini Tal, proposed as relief works in parts of the North-west where canal schemes were wanting. In enclosure No. 4 will be found a letter from the North-west Provinces, dated October 4, describing the situation as it then stood. It will be observed that the rainfall had been less; that prices were higher; that crime, due mainly to want, was more rife; that panic among the people and the grain-dealers was greater; and that emigration was more general than had been the case at the same season in the famine years of 1860 and 1868.

'Happily this has all changed. Rain has fallen from the 5th to the 8th all over the provinces; we have not yet learnt full particulars from all parts of the country. Up to the morning of the 8th, 3 inches had fallen at Agra, where the need was worst; and the native states to the west have received bountiful rain. We shall have the honour of informing your Lordship by telegraph of the exact condition of affairs. But at any rate the outlook is entirely changed; Sir George Couper has telegraphed that he does not require any more engineers, and that the project for light railways will not be necessary.

'The condition of the Punjab was less critical than that of the North-west, by reason of the heavy downpour of rain in August. Still, there too, most of the unirrigated autumn crop was lost; and the spring crops

could not be sown unless rain came. The large stocks of grain in the province had kept prices below famine rates; no actual distress had been reported; and no relief operations had been undertaken; nevertheless the position was extremely anxious and critical. The rainfall of the past three days has happily extended to parts of the Punjab ; 6 inches have fallen at Delhi ; from ½ inch to 2 inches have fallen at Amballa, Jullundur, Lahore, and Rawul Pindi; there has been ½ inch at Amritsur. The Lieutenant-Governor writes that "this rain has been a great relief to our anxiety; that there will now be great sowing of spring crop all over the country where rain has fallen; but that prices will keep dear until the fate of the spring crop is assured." '

Later in the year, the Viceregal Council reported:—

'Though the condition of affairs in Rajputana was very greatly improved by the rainfall reported in our letter of October 11, yet there were tracts where no autumn crops had been saved, and where spring crops never grow. These tracts were situate principally in Marwar and the desert states north and west of the Aravelli hills. Emigrants from these parts were reported to be still thronging Ajmere, and therefore while postponing the preparation of railway work beyond the Sendra pass towards Erinpoorah, we have directed that our sanction to the prosecution of railway work in the pass shall hold good, in order that relief employment may be provided for destitute immigrants. In Central India, though the prospect of the Malwa crops is good, and though there has been further rain in Gwalior, yet there is not sufficient agricultural employment for the many thousands of immigrants, who have come into the country between Neemuch and Indore. On the representation of the Agent, Sir Henry Daly, we have directed that the earthwork, on the Neemuch and

Rutlam section of the Central India Railway, shall be commenced at both ends. In this way employment will be provided for immigrants into the Western States of Central India. But in the South-eastern States also there is need for relief to the immigrant poor, who were flocking down the great road from Agra to Indore. Though the emigrants are beginning to return home northwards, yet all have not the means of supporting themselves on their homeward journey; and deaths among them from cholera, and even from hunger, are reported. Goona is the only place where British officers are quartered on the whole length of road from Gwalior to Indore. The officers there have, partly from private subscriptions and partly with the help of a grant from the Madras relief fund, opened relief-houses, and have given food and clothing to many thousands of destitute wayfarers. The Maharaja Scindia has engaged to maintain, and indeed has maintained, relief-houses as far as Seepree on the Indore road; and arrangements are being made for opening relief-places between Seepree and Goona. The recipients of relief are subjects of native states, and the relief-houses will be in native territory. The cost of these operations ought not properly to be a charge on the British Indian taxpayer. But the relief is being given; and if the money for its cost cannot be had elsewhere, the British Treasury will have to bear the charge. Effort will be made, however, to procure the necessary funds from the native states interested. For those immigrants who require relief-employment near Goona, work is being commenced on a cross-road from Goona to Oojein, for which funds are available in the Central India Agency budget of the current year.

'There has been no further appreciable rain in the North-west Provinces; but there has been a good fall

of rain at Rawul Pindi in the Punjab, which had not shared in the rain of the second week of October. Over the whole of the North-west Provinces, the Punjab and Oudh, preparations for the spring crop are making good progress; an unusually broad area is being sown with spring grains; and prices have fallen somewhat. We have not yet heard whether all the proposed relief works can at once be foregone. But the schemes for extensive relief works in the North-west Provinces have been laid aside, while in the Punjab no need for special relief works had been represented by the local Government.'

After this time, and for some months in 1878, distress deepened in the North-west Provinces, and much suffering was endured. Chiefly by works, and in some cases by gratuitous relief, the disaster was met, but only incompletely, the death-rate in the earlier part of 1878 being very high. In April, some relief works were closed, and the distress in these regions was considered at an end.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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